



MATTHEW PARRIS

Time for the Tories to hibernate

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Flannel is this autumn's must

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Wilde's grandson on the distortions of a new film

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Guide to Peps



Portillo makes return from exile

Hague seeks the party that cares

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

William Hague will today unveil his vision of a new "popular Conservatism" by setting out to reinvent the Tories as the party of compassion and tolerance.

In a daring attempt to transform its image, Mr Hague is insisting that he wants to lead a party that cares for the poor, disadvantaged and oppressed, and is more liberal in its attitude both to people who bring up families outside marriage and to the sexual misdemeanours of politicians. He will call for a party that is determined "to show that it cares".

In an extraordinary alliance with the party's most prominent exile, Michael Portillo, the Tory leader is in effect relaunching the party in the wake of its devastating election defeat. This amounts to an admission that the Tories lost the faith of voters because they failed to address the social concerns of the nation, concentrating instead on economic issues. But it risks upsetting traditionalists.

Echoing Tony Blair's modernisation crusade that brought Labour back to power, Mr Hague will call for a "changing Conservatism" that acknowledges its mistakes. Mr Portillo made his political comeback last night with a 6,000-word speech — read a week ago by Mr Hague — in which he tried to chart the party's path to recovery. In its most striking passage, the former Defence Secretary, while acknowledging the Conservatives as the party of the family, called for a more generous approach to those outside the traditional family unit. He wanted a more tolerant approach to mothers who brought up children on their own and to homosexuals.

He said: "We believe that children are best brought up in stable family arrangements with two parents. But we admire those many people who are doing an excellent job raising children on their own." He added that in politics



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there should be a distinction between sexual peccadilloes, which should not normally result in dismissal from office, and financial misconduct.

Mr Hague, always a close supporter of Mr Portillo, said that he agreed with every word of the speech. And in a Channel 4 interview last night he said for the first time that he would not sack Shadow Cabinet members or Shadow Ministers caught having affairs, provided they were not guilty of hypocrisy or financial impropriety.

Today he will say in his keynote speech of the week: "I want to tell you about an open Conservatism, that is tolerant, that believes freedom is about



"If this doesn't work, you're all fired"

more than economics. That believes freedom does not stop at the shop counter. I want to tell you about a democratic, popular Conservatism that listens, that is determined to show it cares."

The co-ordination of message between Mr Portillo and Mr Hague revived speculation last night that the former minister could be brought back as party chairman after Lord Parkinson has completed his limited term. But Mr Portillo emphasised that he was not making any kind of long-term leadership bid.

Mr Hague said that the sentiments voiced by Mr Portillo about family life were popular. He declared: "I want to support the family, but we are not going to prescribe how everybody should lead their lives."

The emerging redefinition of Toryism appeared to be too swift for some and a backlash could come from older party members.

In a Centre for Policy Studies lecture, Mr Portillo said the Tories were beaten because they appeared insensitive to social issues "using the language of economics and high finance when people's jobs and self-esteem were at stake".

Peter Lilley, the Shadow Chancellor, backed Mr Portillo, saying many people were single parents through no fault of their own and the Tories had never denigrated them.

Mr Hague last night made even more explicit that the Tories would embrace single-parent families and "other family units", apparently a reference to gay couples.

He said: "We are not saying there are no circumstances in which it is right for single parents to bring up their children. We are saying: let's be alive to the 21st century, let's be tolerant at the way people wish to live when it doesn't damage the interests of other people and that doesn't conflict with our support for families."



Donatella Versace appears briefly on the catwalk in Milan after showing her first collection for the label last night

The spirit of Versace lives on

FROM HEATH BROWN IN MILAN

STILL in mourning, the fashion designer Donatella Versace showed her first collection for the Gianni Versace label in Milan last night — a job she inherited from her brother Gianni after his murder in Miami three months ago. With the eyes of the fashion world on her, the question was in which direction would she take the fashion house her brother had built up to be a favourite of the rich and famous?

Demi Moore, Angelica Houston and Cher were among the celebrity line-up at the show, along with rival designers including Karl Lagerfeld, Giorgio Armani and Miuccia Prada.

The event, at the Versace Palazzo in Via Gesù, had all the glittering trappings of Versace shows of the past but without the usual pre-show chattering excitement — a subdued air of respect pervaded the showroom.

The production began with a lasered message across the back curtain: "This show is

dedicated to our brother Gianni and to our entire staff and their incredible love and devotion that was so precious to him. We thank each and every one of you."

Then with funky upbeat fanfare (music created and mixed by Boy George) the auditorium came alive as Naomi Campbell and Kate Moss, the British models, strode out in a sparkling grey trouser suit and a Prince of Wales check bustier with super sheen denim pants. The colours of the outfits became brighter as the show proceeded with neutral

tones of grey contrasting with soft blue, tangerine, apricot and light vivid green. The look had the Versace signature — short, sassy and sexy but with a more restrained use of detailing in cleaner silhouettes and perfectly simple cuts.

Ms Versace came out of the wings to a standing ovation and exited after a quick bow.

"It had all the best elements of Versace but with a newer, softer touch," said Alexander Shulman, the British Vogue editor.

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Germans trigger rate rise across Europe

By Janet Bush, Economics Editor

GERMANY yesterday triggered a sudden rise in European interest rates, signalling its determination to press ahead towards a single currency in January 1999.

The Bundesbank, the central bank, raised interest rates for the first time in more than five years. It was swiftly followed by France, Belgium, Austria, The Netherlands and Denmark.

The Bundesbank's increase in the repo rate — the key German money market rate — from 3.0 per cent to 3.30 per cent — was far larger than the financial markets had anticipated and was seen as an aggressive signal that, if monetary union is to go ahead, it will be on the terms set by the German central bank.

The move marked the start of much closer co-ordination of interest rates in the run-up to the start of monetary union.

Far from the "soft" euro which many European governments had been banking on to cut record unemployment levels, the Bundesbank's move sent a clear message that any EMU in which it participates will be anti-inflationary. It is a remarkable confirmation of the Bundesbank's pre-occupation with controlling inflation that it raised interest rates in the week that German unemployment topped 4.5 million, a postwar record.

The move will increase the likelihood that Tony Blair will keep Britain out of the first wave of monetary union. An announcement is expected over the next few weeks.

Even as interest rates rose all over Europe, the Bank of England's monetary policy committee decided to leave

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Prodi offers to quit

Italy was thrown into political turmoil after Romano Prodi, the centre-left Prime Minister, offered his resignation to President Scalfaro after the refusal of his Communist allies to back him in parliament over the 1998 budget. Page 17

Apology move over Bloody Sunday

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is "moving towards" a formal apology for the events of Bloody Sunday, according to Labour Party sources.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, is expected to announce next month an independent review of fresh evidence presented by the Irish Government on the fatal shooting of 14 men by members of the Parachute Regiment during a Londonderry civil rights demonstration in 1972. Members of her party believe that review will pave the way for an apology.

Government officials say no decision has yet been made, and that any speculation is premature, but one senior Labour MP closely involved in Northern Ireland affairs said: "She's moving towards a formal apology. There is a general feeling that as difficult as it might be, the terrible business that took place that day has to be addressed."

A source in Belfast said Dr Mowlam recognised that "it is important to resolve the matter and wind it up". The idea was "some kind of review to look at the new material and possibly lead to a formal apology".

Lawyers doubted whether an apology would expose the

Government to legal claims for compensation from the victims' relatives so long after the event, though it could create a moral obligation.

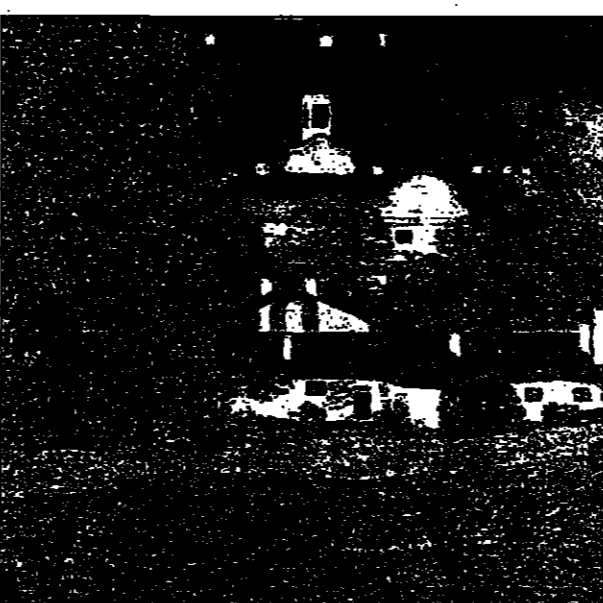
A spokesman for the Bloody Sunday Justice Campaign said the relatives' goal was neither compensation nor an apology but the "full truth about Bloody Sunday — the hows and the whys and the whos". That was the only way to put it behind them.

The shootings have been a festering sore for a quarter of a century. In April 1972 the Widgery tribunal largely exonerated the British soldiers, saying they had been fired on first, but nationalists and republicans called that report a whitewash.

In 1993 John Major said those killed could be regarded as innocent, but rejected demands for a public inquiry. The material the Irish Government presented to Dr Mowlam in June was largely based on two recent television documentaries and a new book containing hundreds of eyewitness accounts.

Kew Maginnis, the Ulster Unionist Party's security spokesman, issued a warning that regardless of whether a review was justified it

Continued on page 2, col 4



£14.5m record for Klimt landscape

This striking landscape by Gustav Klimt, the Viennese master, sold yesterday for £14.5 million at Christie's in London (Dalya Alberghe writes).

Schloss Kammer am Attersee II had been expected to fetch a mere £6 million but an anonymous private collector bidding on the telephone was determined to fight off competition from a buyer in the room.

Christie's described it as the most expensive work sold in London since 1988, a record price for Klimt and the most expensive work sold anywhere this year.

Michelangelo sale, page 8

Queen un.masks woman who fibbed about her age

By Alan Hamilton

A LADY is entitled to her little secret — at least until the Queen spills the beans.

Una Marshall, helped by her husband John, was opening stacks of cards marking her 98th birthday at her home in East Kilbride, Lanarkshire. But there was also a telegram from Buckingham Palace congratulating her on attaining her century.

After 80 years of perfect deception, the game was up.

Mrs Marshall had no choice but to come clean. When, during the First World War, she met 18-year-old John Marshall, who really is 98, it was not done for a woman to be walking out with, and certainly not marrying, a younger man. So the 20-year-old subtracted two years from her age and, until yesterday,

they assumed was their joint 90th birthday.

But some mystery person knew the truth, and alerted Buckingham Palace. "If the Queen is to send out a 100th birthday telegram, someone has to let us know, and we like it to be backed up with a birth certificate or some other documentary evidence," a Palace spokesman said.

Why did the truth not come out when the couple claimed their pensions? Because all such matters were firmly in the hands of Mrs Marshall, who has always handled the family finances.

The Queen, who was complaining only this week about becoming too old for the modern age, is firmly believed by her husband, and all other competent authorities, to be 71.

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liam and Flo, any way, at the desk. Tory ballgoers had been offered the chance to pose for a portrait, one at a time, as the happy couple peered chestily and wearily into the camera. In some snaps, William had his mouth open while Flo had hers closed. In others was the other way round. In a few, both mouths were open or shut. I pointed out this interesting fact to the man behind the stall.

"I'm not going to say anything, in case you write down," he waived.

□ The Tories yesterday threatened to break the bipartisan approach to Northern Ireland if the Government failed to follow the peace process principles agreed while John Major was Prime Minister (Jill Sherman writes).

Hunt inquiry call

Farmers' leaders are to press for a public inquiry into the future of hunting. Barney Holbeche, of the National Farmers' Union, hopes that the Government will be attracted by the proposal as a way of killing off the controversial anti-hunting Bill, due for its second reading in the Commons on November 28.

THE Lord Chancellor has ditched controversial plans for a Judicial Appointments Commission, in which lay people would have helped in the selection of judges.

Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, said yesterday he had decided not to consult on the idea of setting up a Commission because of the "very heavy workload" facing his department. Instead, he announced other measures aimed at modernising the judiciary in the run-up to the millennium and improving "openness, flexibility and effectiveness" of the system.

Vacancies for High Court judgeships will be advertised for the first time within the legal profession, ending the system of appointment to the High Court by invitation only. There are currently 93 High Court judges on a salary of £108,192. Under the last Lord Chancellor, vacancies of lower judicial ranks such as circuit and district judges were introduced.

Lord Irvine is also to consider setting up a judges' ombudsman to handle complaints from aggrieved candidates for judicial posts. The proposal for a Judicial Appointments Commission, Labour policy for some years although omitted from the

election manifesto, is strongly opposed by the senior judiciary.

But Lord Irvine is understood to have changed his mind about a Commission without the need for lobbying by senior judges. A Lord Chancellor's Department spokesman said: "It is his decision entirely. Obviously he talks to senior judges - but he feels that a Commission is really not necessary at the moment. It can never set back, but it is really on the never-burner. He would rather get on with the changes he thinks should be made."

Other planned reforms included consideration of whether part-time judges - assistant recorders and recorders - should undergo "performance appraisal".

Some 15 in 100 are part-time men and women with families, he announced flexibility in the "sitting" requirements for part-time judges (assistant recorders and recorders) so that they can notch up their 20 days sitting a year more conveniently.

Supporters of a commission - made up of lay members as well as legal professionals - believed it would open up the appointments process and help break the dominance of the judiciary by white, middle class men.

The new BBC service, which the corporation said would cost £30 million a year to run, is intended for the new digital television service which was expected to be launched this autumn but have been delayed until next year. The corporation is now planning to launch the service on cable and transmit it on BBC1 in the early hours of the morning.

BSkyB has accused the BBC of predatory pricing in offering the service free to cable companies. But the corporation says that the service is being funded from the licence fee and that cable customers have already paid for it and should not be charged twice.

Sky may now be forced to reduce the

price it charges cable operators for Sky News, which is available to satellite viewers without extra charge. Earlier this week Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, said that Sky News had now reached profitability for the first time after seven years' "hard work".

The BBC has been trying to persuade cable operators not to drop Sky News, arguing that its service would be markedly different.

BSkyB said last night that it believed there was no demand for another 24-hour news service. "But we look forward to competing with BBC News, as we have competed with the BBC in sport and other programming."

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Survivor saw friend washed away in storm

By PAUL WHITTAKER

THE skipper of a yacht which capsized after being swamped by a rogue wave off the French coast told last night how he was forced to watch helplessly as his friend was washed away.

Bob Beggs, 37, and Andy Nurse, 33, clung to an upturned liferaft for eight hours after the accident in which Ray Newton, 33, who had three children, is feared drowned.

Mr Beggs, a sailing instructor from Plymouth, and Mr Nurse, of London, were winched to safety from the Bay of Biscay by a French navy helicopter shortly before 7am yesterday after their ordeal in the gale-lashed seas.

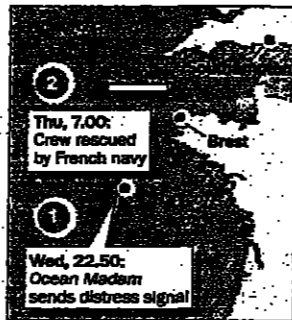
All three men were army Commando reservists; Mr Beggs and Mr Nurse are both former serving Commandos. Neither Mr Nurse nor Mr

Newton had been out to sea on a yacht before.

Mr Beggs, speaking from a French military hospital in Brest, Brittany, said: "We were hit by a large wave which completely overturned the yacht. Two of us managed to cling to the boat for about two minutes and then another wave righted the boat."

Mr Beggs said he had not intended to abandon the yacht, which was nose-down in the water. The two rescued men were securing supplies in the six-man raft when it broke away from the dismasted vessel.

He said Mr Newton, who had been sleeping below when the wave hit, and had been strapped to the boat by a safety harness, had not managed to reach the raft before it was swept away in the huge



swell. The liferaft later filled with water and overturned with the two men clinging to its slippery underside.

The alarm was raised at 10.50pm on Wednesday night when French rescue authorities received a distress signal from the 38th Ocean Madam 120 miles west of Brest. Mr Beggs said he and Nurse heard aircraft searching for them overhead for several

hours but were unable to retrieve flares to signal the planes. "They knew the area we were in but they couldn't see us. We knew if we could hang on until first light they would be able to spot us," Mr Beggs said.

There were unconfirmed reports that the pilot of an airplane saw Mr Newton, of London, swimming but he could not be located by the time a helicopter found them.

Mr Nurse said he was torn by conflicting emotions. "It was an incredible relief as we were hoisted into the helicopter, and then a major downer when the first thing I asked was whether they had found a third man, and they said no."

He added: "Ray and I had never been out to sea on a yacht before, and I was a bit apprehensive about the sea, so I thought I would sort my phobia out, but I don't think this has done the job."

The three friends set off on a voyage from Malta almost a month ago and were sailing the final leg from La Coruna, Spain, to Plymouth when they hit the force nine gale.

Mr Beggs, an experienced sailor who was skippering the Dartmouth-registered vessel as a favour for its owner, Paul Drew of Devon, said: "I am devastated at what happened to him (Ray). It was a horrendous night for us but we are both ex-servicemen so that made it easier."

"The water was warm but I don't know how long we could have lasted. We were going along one minute and the next minute we were under water and upside down in the pitch dark." The two rescued sailors were expected to return to England last night.

Mr Beggs's partner, Carole Newman, who lives with him and their seven-month-old daughter Rebecca, said she was very relieved he was safe



Bob Beggs, skipper of the yacht, was rescued after eight hours clinging to a liferaft

and had not been injured. "He was the skipper so he feels it is his responsibility," she said.

The yachtsman Tony Bullimore, who was rescued by the Royal Australian Navy from an upturned boat in the Southern Ocean last January, said he knew Mr Beggs from his days on the Plymouth yachting scene. Mr Bullimore said: "I'm over the moon to hear

Bob and another man are safe and just hope they find the missing person too."

He praised the French rescue authorities and added: "It shows the importance of having beacons fitted to all craft, whether they be small pleasure craft or large commercial vessels."

Gordon Whatley, the Falmouth Coastguard watch of-

ficer, last night described Mr Newton's chances of survival as slim. "He has been in the water for an awfully long time — but you never know."

A French naval patrol helicopter and the merchant vessel *Nadia* were preparing to abandon their search in fading light last night with rescue efforts being hampered by 30-40 knot winds.

Sligo on alert for return of French killer

By ANDREW MAGEE AND SUSAN BELL

IRISH police, ports and airports were placed on alert yesterday for a suspected French triple killer believed to be planning further attacks in Ireland.

Jacques Girardin, 39, is being sought by French and Irish police after Pascale Longessaigne, 38, was found last week raped and stabbed to death in her apartment in Angers, northwest France.

Her son Florian, 4, and Camille, her 18-month old daughter, were found in a separate room, stabbed and bludgeoned to death with a hammer in what French police called "an indescribably savage attack".

They were dead for up to two weeks before neighbours' complaints of a foul smell were investigated last Thursday.

French police believe that Girardin, a former psychiatric patient, may be en route to Ireland, where he has lived intermittently since 1989. They found his diary, in which he wrote of his plans to kill people in Ireland. Interpol contacted the Gardai to warn them. A French arrest warrant is expected.

The suspect lived in Sligo where people are petrified at the prospect of his return. He regularly argued with the townspeople and was convicted in 1990 of trying to burn down a restaurant after management barred him for pestering staff. He returned at night and threw a petrol bomb through the door. He was jailed for five years for the arson attack, but released after two years and deported to France.

He returned on two occasions and was treated in a psychiatric hospital after being spotted lurking around primary schools.



Jacques Girardin: savage attack

CRASH KILLS SAILOR WHO WON OLYMPIC MEDAL FOR BRITAIN

By EDWARD GORMAN SAILING CORRESPONDENT

THE British sailing world was in mourning yesterday following the death of one of its brightest stars, Olympic silver-medallist John Merricks, who was killed in a car crash in Italy on Wednesday night.

Merricks, 26, had been taking part in the Glenfiddich Melges 24 European Championships at Punta Ala with a crew including his longtime sailing partner, friend and fellow 470 silver medallist, Ian Walker. According to sources in Punta Ala, the pair were among 12 people in a Land-Rover on their way to a sponsor's dinner after racing, when the driver lost control and the vehicle crashed. No other car was



Merricks: tributes

involved. Merricks was in the front passenger seat and died at the scene. Also injured were Sacha Nice, who suffered bad cuts and damage to his shoulder, and Andy Yeoman, who has a fractured skull.

Merricks and Walker won

silver at the Olympics last year and won the Mumm 36 class in the Admiral's Cup this summer. They were leading the Melges regatta with two days left to sail. However, as a mark of respect, the organisers cancelled the remaining races, though one may be held today as a memorial.

The death of one of the most popular and talented helmsmen shocked the sport. Jim Saltonstall, the Royal Yachting Association Olympic team coach, who first taught Merricks when he was 14, said: "There was a lot of natural talent and flair which was always wanting to burst out of him. To John, sailing came first and everything else came second."

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Professor digs up an explanation for nightmare of the living-dead

By A CORRESPONDENT

ZOMBIES — supposedly, corpses brought back to life by black magic — are probably people with psychiatric disorders and brain damage, according to a British anthropologist.

Voodoo is so much part of the culture in Haiti, where thousands are said to wander the Caribbean island, that "zombification" is considered murder under the penal code, even though the victim is still alive.

Zombies are people whose will, awareness and memory have been stolen by a sorcerer, called a bokor. The victim appears to be dead and is usually buried in an above-ground tomb. The bokor then steals and re-animates the body, and sets it to work as a slave. Up to 1,000 zombies

are said to be created each year, and they are frequently recognised by the local population.

Their horror-film world was investigated by Professor Roland Littlewood, from the Department of Anthropology and Psychiatry at University College London, with Chavannes Douyon, an expert based at the Polyclinique Médica in Port-au-Prince.

One "zombie", a 30-year-old woman who apparently died and was then found wandering near her village three years later, appeared to have a severe psychiatric condition called catatonic schizophrenia, which made her mute and immobile. A 26-year-old man, who also turned up after being buried in a family tomb, seemed to be suffering from brain damage and epilepsy — possibly due to

an episode of oxygen starvation. The scientists wrote in *The Lancet* that it was possible that belief in zombies helped to integrate mentally ill individuals into society. However, they did not rule out the possibility that poisons — such as the toxin from the puffer fish — may be used by bokors to induce paralysis, after which the victims are stolen from tombs. A substance called *Datura stramonium* had been suggested as a means of reviving the victims.

The researchers said there was unlikely to be a single explanation for all zombies. "Given that death is locally recognised without access to medical certification, and that burial usually occurs within a day of death, it is not implausible for a retrieved person to be alive," they said.

Driver guilty of killing five when digger arm hit cars

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

AN OVERWORKED lorry driver who caused the deaths of five motorists when he forgot to secure the arm of a digger he was transporting was yesterday found guilty of dangerous driving.

The digger's bucket swung loose in the dark and sliced the roofs off five cars, decapitating four drivers and a passenger in the accident near Newquay, Cornwall.

Mark Wade, the driver of the low-loader, told Truro Crown Court that he had worked for 15 hours and driven about 500 miles that

day for his employers, who were also found guilty. He said he had no training or proper supervision and made fatal safety errors before the accident at Castle-an-Dinas in December 1995.

The court was told that tiredness could have been a factor in Wade's failure to load the digger safely. He did not secure the arm with a pin or chain and dirt caused the hydraulics to fail. Wade said he had never been taught how to secure the digger arm and claimed most drivers did not use the chain provided.

Wade, of St Columb Major, Cornwall, had denied causing

the death of Gwyneth Moore, 31, and Kristy Green, 19, both from Bodmin; and William Barratt, 54, Mark Trebilcock, 28, and Hilary Cocks, 43, all from Newquay.

Bazeley Plant Hire, of St Columb Major, and Chestnut Plant Hire, had both denied failing to ensure the vehicle was not a safety risk.

Before the trial Wade admitted falsifying a tachograph record and five counts of failing to keep proper driving records.

Sentencing on Wade was adjourned for social inquiry reports. Both companies will be sentenced today.

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Boston harbours no doubts about au pair's guilt

AS THE trial of Louise Woodward, the 19-year-old British au pair charged with murdering a nine-month-old boy in her care, ended its third day yesterday, resentful locals remain convinced of her guilt.

The people of Cambridge, a pleasant university town dominated by Harvard, and of bustling Boston near by, are riveted by the case. They waste no time in telling you that "she did it" or that "she must have done it".

There is also a simmering resentment against the British press, which is accused of siding with Miss Woodward and of casting aspersions on the quality of American justice.

Local news interest has been unflagging. Radio talk shows

Residents resent aspersions on American justice, reports Tunku Varadarajan

are dominated by it, as is regional television. The front pages of the local papers — *The Boston Globe*, a broadsheet, and the tabloid *Boston Herald* — are plastered regularly with her pictures, in which she always appears severe and impassive.

The press fastens on to the minutiae of Miss Woodward's life with the Eappen family,

whose baby son, Matthew, she is accused of killing. Instinctively, the news coverage has been slanted against her; the area is old-fashioned, and there is great sympathy for the middle-class couple who are grieving for their dead child.

At Sonnie's, a stylish bar in Boston, I spoke to a group of students from Harvard. They were convinced that Miss Woodward had killed the boy in her charge. One said: "You can see it in her face. I mean, she's the nanny from hell." Another, a woman, said: "Sure, she did it. There may be some doubts, but those will be resolved as the trial continues. There is no way that she's going to get off."

In adversity, Miss Woodward is a ubiquitous figure. At breakfast today, the waitress at my table said: "You're down from England for the trial, aren't you? What do you think? She did it, didn't she?"

At the Green Dragon Tavern in Boston — an Irish pub — discussion swiftly turned to Miss Woodward after some routine unpleasantness about Ulster. "Let's face it, chaps," a swifter of dark beer pronounced, "you think she's innocent just because she's from England. Well, things don't work like that around here, you know."

Intriguingly, however, there is an undercurrent of com-



Woodward smiling yesterday: the American press shows her severe-faced

plaint against Deborah Eappen, the dead boy's mother. Marjorie O'Hanlon, a woman in her mid-fifties serving behind a bar, told me: "How could she leave her child in the care of someone she didn't know?"

"Okay, she had a job, she was a doctor, she had a good salary. But does she have a baby now? No. I think she

shares some responsibility for choosing not to stay at home."

Yesterday, at the trial, the pendulum appeared to have swung back to the prosecution. Patrick Barnes, a neuro-radiologist at Boston's Children's Hospital, testified that the injuries sustained by Matthew were "a classic model of the shaken-impact brain injury one sees in child

abuse". Unlike some witnesses on the second day, who suggested that Matthew's injuries may have occurred "up to two weeks before" his admission to hospital on February 5, Dr Barnes said that it was inconceivable that the "shaking and impacting" occurred any earlier than a few hours before he was admitted for treatment.

Courtroom clash over expert's testimony

LAWYERS for Miss Woodward clashed with an expert prosecution witness yesterday over his claims that Matthew Eappen could not have died from accidental injuries.

Barry Schreck, for the defence, said to Patrick Barnes, a neuro-radiologist, during cross-examination: "Let us assume on February 4 there was no impact." The doctor said: "That's a hard one to assume."

Mr Schreck then asked him to assume that "there had been some prior bleeding in the brain causing Matthew to have difficulty breathing". Dr Barnes replied: "That is not what happened."

Mr Schreck shouted at him: "Were you there?" before Judge Hiler Zobel intervened to order both men to be silent.

Two medical experts conceded on Wednesday that the injuries suffered by Matthew could have been days or weeks old from some of the medical evidence. Dr Barnes said there was nothing in the brain scans he carried out to suggest that.

He ruled out a gentle shaking, a tossing on a bed or a fall in the bathroom as a cause of the brain injuries. "It would certainly have required much more force."

However, he admitted that discarded analysis of a blood clot removed from Matthew's brain could have been "helpful".

Miss Woodward, 19, of Elton, near Chester, denies murder. The trial continues.

Saturday in THE TIMES



Byronic man
Murray Lachlan Young, poetry's great white hype
PLUS Caitlin Moran meets Supergrass
AND How to write a best-seller

Making a splat in the noble cause of science

By ANJANA AHUJA

IT PROVES that scientists will study just about anything. The annual list of winning topics in the spoof Ig Nobel prizes last night ranged from chicken-plucking to insect splats on car windcreens. It also showed that scientists have a sense of humour.

The trophies foisted upon those whose "achievements cannot or should not be reproduced" are bestowed in similar fields of endeavour as the genuine Nobel prizes, and 1,200 people attended the irreverent ceremony at Harvard University.

Among the winners was Bernard Vonnegut (deceased brother of Kurt), from the State University of Albany, who was posthumously awarded the prize for meteorology for a report on "Chicken Plucking as a Measure of Tornado Wind Speed". Har-

old Hillman, from the University of Surrey, secured the peace prize for a paper entitled "The Possible Pain Experienced During Execution by Different Methods" in the journal *Perception*.

The prize for medicine was conferred on a trio of American researchers who discovered that the muzak played in lifts could stimulate the immune system and "thus help to prevent the common cold". The developers of Tamagotchi toys walked off with the economics prize "for diverting millions of person-hours of work into the husbandry of virtual pets".

A New Jersey author won the accolade for astronomy for identifying "a human face on Mars and ten-mile high buildings on the far side of the moon". The literature prize went to mathematicians responsible for the discovery of

a secret code in the Bible, and a Florida entomologist was applauded for his scholarly work *That Gunk on Your Car*, "which identifies the insect splats that appear on automobile windows".

An investigation by Japanese and Czech researchers into brainwave patterns of people who chew different flavours of gum picked up the Ig Nobel prize for biology.

Real laureates participated gamely. William Lipscomb (Chemistry, 1976) was given away in a Win-a-Date-with-a-Nobel Laureate competition. Plaster casts of laureates' left feet were auctioned to raise money for schools. The event, in its seventh year, was sponsored by the Harvard-Radcliffe Science Fiction Association, the Harvard Computer Society, and the *Annals of Improbable Research*.



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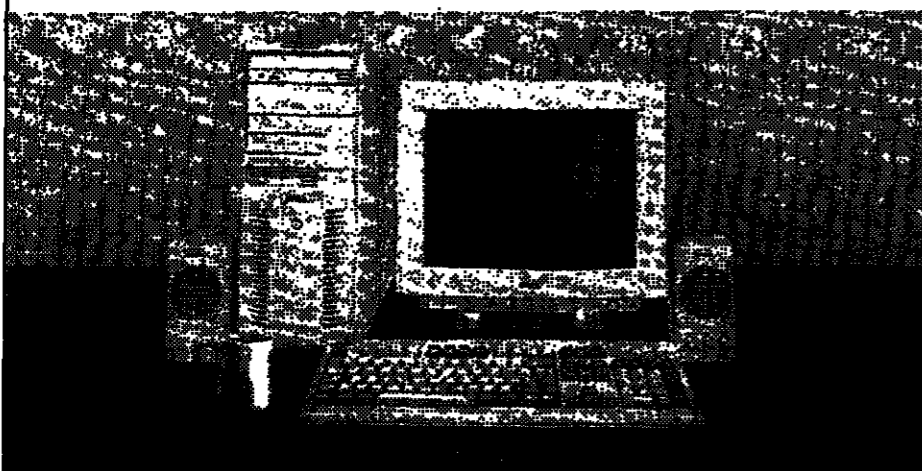


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DELL

Communist Party chief's secretary worked for MI5

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

HARRY POLLITT, leader of the British Communist Party for 30 years until his death in 1960, sent his secretary to Moscow with sensitive material, unaware that she was working for MI5 and that every secret message he transmitted to his Soviet paymasters was being decoded by Britain's intelligence services.

Thousands of messages transmitted secretly by radio in the mid-1930s by Pollitt and other Communists were decoded by the Government Code and Cypher School under Operation Mask. The files, marked "Most Secret", which have been held by GCHQ, the signals intelligence centre in Cheltenham, were released yesterday by the Public Record Office in Kew, southwest London.

One of the most intriguing messages between Moscow and Pollitt concerned the expected arrival in the Soviet capital of an Ann Gray and "a suitcase containing important material".

This was a reference to a woman also known as Olga Gray, who at 19 was recruited by Maxwell Knight, MI5's master agent-runner, and became Pollitt's secretary in the early 1930s. He used to send her on "secret" missions.

Pollitt transmitted a message on April 5, 1936, to a controller codenamed Abraham: "Stewart declares that Ann Gray has a suitcase containing important material." On April 10, Moscow sent back a message after Pollitt's secretary had arrived: "Received suitcase Anne Grey (sic). Books promised not enclosed."

Unaware that his whole organisation had been penetrated and bugged by MI5, Pollitt remained in constant touch with his Soviet controllers in the Communist International (Comintern), the international body set up by the Soviet Union to co-ordinate Communist activities.

Money was one of his prime concerns and hundreds of his messages refer to payments that were made via Stockholm. The money was paid in Dutch guilders or Swiss francs or sometimes French francs.

One of Moscow's orders was for Pollitt and the Communist Party to mount a campaign to support the trials in Moscow of Trotsky and Grigori Zinoviev, president of the Comintern who had been charged with being in league with the fascists. His efforts, however, were not good enough for Moscow, which complained in a message on August 20, 1936, that the campaign was developing "very weakly".

But eight days later a message was transmitted to Moscow from an agent in London codenamed West: "Received from Stockholm 24,000 Dutch guilders and 2,200 Swedish kronas, equal to £3,344/5/9."

Pollitt used to be paid monthly in advance. But sometimes he admitted he was in financial trouble.

In 1934 he was put on trial but was acquitted. He was congratulated by Moscow. But Pollitt replied: "Thanks for congratulations... but it cost £400, repeat £400. What about that side of it? Would you like to see me arrested for debt?"

Several messages also revealed Pollitt's annoyance over Moscow's insistence on him sending female students to attend a special training establishment called Wilson School.

On November 7, 1934, Pollitt sent the following message to Moscow: "Why give me a dog's life about girl students? Sending you two by steamer, leaving this week. Do you want all the women we have? Begin suspect you personally keep harem."

Five days later, a message came from Moscow: "Desire one more girl."



Every secret message Harry Pollitt sent to his Soviet paymasters was decoded

Humble harmonica wins a degree of respectability

By EMMA WILKINS

THE mouth organ, favoured instrument of lovelorn cowboys and penniless buskers, has achieved academic respectability with the introduction of a university degree course in harmonica studies.

Steve Lockwood, 30, has given up his job as singer and musician in his own five band to begin a three-year course at Anglia University in Cambridge. Instead of studying classical composers, he will play the blues and jazz and analyse the work of leading harmonica players including Larry Adler and Sonny Boy Williamson.

As the only student on the harmonica course, Mr Lockwood will also study how Bob Dylan and The Rolling Stones have influenced the popularity of the mouth organ.

"I love the harmonica above all other instruments because of its range of expression," Mr Lockwood said. "It can sound camp-fire classically sad or very lively and happy. You can play classical, blues, folk and jazz. The harmonica is totally accessible — you can take it anywhere and it can be played by a four year old."

Mr Lockwood is cutting down on foreign tours with his nine-man band, Jump Bump N'Boogie, for the duration of his course. "I want to write classical and modern music for the harmonica. But my ultimate aim is to become professor of the harmonica at a university," he said.

There are professors of the harmonica in other parts of the world, but I think it would be a first in Britain."

Larry Adler, 84, who first played the mouth organ professionally at the age of 14, welcomed Mr Lockwood's commitment. "I have never heard of anyone taking a degree in the harmonica but I think it's a fine idea. I hope he succeeds in his ambition to become a professor."

A glass of whatever you fancy gladdens the heart

By IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

BEER, wine or spirits drunk in moderation are all good for reducing the risk of heart disease in people over 50, according to research published yesterday.

There has been considerable evidence in the past that red wine drunk in small quantities regularly is good for the heart. However, Arthur Klatsky, a professor at the Kaiser Centre in Oakland, California, told a London conference that beer, especially German beer, was better for the hearts of men. Wine was better than beer for women's hearts, although there was no particular advantage in red over white.

A quarter of the people in the developed world die of heart disease, and the conference at the Novartis Foundation was told that in people over 50, those who drank up to three units a day were 25 per cent less likely to suffer from cardiovascular disease.

Although there was no clear idea of how alcohol protected the heart, evidence pointed to the fact that it increased levels of high-density lipoprotein — known as the "good cholesterol" — which reduced the risk of a stroke. The important factor in taking alcohol as a medicine was never to go on a binge, but to maintain a small regular intake.

"When studies are controlled for lifestyle, education, drinking habits and beverage preference, a small amount of alcohol seems to protect men and women to the same degree," Peter Anderson of the World Health Organisation said.

The first television commercial by a heart-disease charity will be shown tonight during Channel 4's *Brookside*. It is part of a four-week campaign by the British Heart Foundation to shock the public into realising that coronary disease kills 1,300 more people under 50 each year than do road accidents.

Experts discount deadly flu virus

By NICK NUTTALL

DOCTORS preparing for the seasonal outbreak of influenza viruses say that a deadly new strain isolated in Hong Kong will not disrupt their plans for this year's immunisation programme.

The virus, H5N1, was detected in a three-year-old boy who caught the disease and died from pneumonia in May. Experts at the National Influenza Centre in Rotterdam fear that it could trigger a worldwide epidemic, echoing the influenza epidemics of 1918 when up to 30 million people died.

A spokesman for the Public Health Laboratory Service's Centre for Communicable Diseases said last night: "We do not consider this a threat to any communities, especially in the West." The strain contracted by the boy was found to have come from chickens at his preschool centre. The spokesman said they believed it would remain "an avian phenomenon. H5 and other avian viruses are not transmissible within the human population. The fact that this boy did not transmit it supports this theory."

Public health experts are not predicting an epidemic this year, because Britons have built up immunity to the flu viruses heading this way from the southern hemisphere.

WHO IS WRONG, ANDREW MORTON FOR RELAUNCHING HIS BOOK, OR THE PUBLIC FOR BUYING IT?

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Wilde grandson condemns film as 'gay-obsessed'

BY DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE grandson of Oscar Wilde yesterday accused the makers of a film biography of concentrating on his homosexuality to the exclusion of almost all else, including his genius.

Merlin Holland, 51, expressed outrage and regret at a lost opportunity. "This is a film which at best leaves those people unfamiliar with Wilde with an impression of him as a man who jumped in and out of bed with young men."

His homosexuality, for which the dramatist was sentenced in 1895 to two years' hard labour in prison, should have been only part of the film, Mr Holland said. Shortly after reading the script, and feeling that his criticisms were falling on deaf ears, Mr Holland, a writer, turned down a £5,000 fee to be a consultant.

He has refused an invitation to the premiere of *Wilde* which opens next Friday, starring Stephen Fry, claiming that the makers had gone beyond artistic licence. "When they found the film was too long, they cut the only two real literary scenes: about his life



The young Oscar, by an unknown artist

as a journalist and the reception of *Dorian Gray*."

He added: "If I went to the premiere, people would be coming up, saying, 'Isn't it a wonderful film?' or 'What do you think of the film?' I don't want to be put in that position."

He claims that, of 109 scenes, 11 feature physical contact of a sexual nature, while a further 30 touch on homosexuality through dialogue or body language. "And that's not to mention the

trials." One of the most offensive scenes, he said, featured Wilde playing voyeur to Alfred "Bosie" Douglas with a rent boy at the Savoy, for which Mr Holland said there was no evidence.

It was the scandalous affair with Douglas that led to Wilde's downfall. His wife, Constance, fled the country with their two sons and changed the family name to Holland. Her grandson spoke of being disturbed by a scene showing photographs of half-naked Sicilian fisherboys being found in Wilde's desk. "That gives it a sort of grubby feel which I can't believe was there, given what we know about him. It turns Oscar into a dirty paedophile."

He contrasted *Wilde* with two earlier films, starring Robert Morley (1959) and Peter Finch (1960). Both were so prim that they failed to show the lovers even holding hands. *Wilde*, he said, had gone to the other extreme and failed to balance his homosexuality with his love for his family.

Mr Holland also criticised minor factual errors and questioned why Wilde's first trial had been distorted. In the film,



Merlin Holland refused to be employed as a consultant on *Wilde*, believing his views had been ignored. He will not attend the premiere

the first trial ends with Wilde going to his solicitor's office and confirming that he is withdrawing his libel action against the Marquess of Queensberry, Douglas's father. "What happened was more dramatic. He withdrew in open court."

Hearing of the criticisms, Marc Samuelson, co-producer of the film, said: "I don't

regard Merlin Holland as a film critic of any note. So whatever he may think is negated by some of the astoundingly positive reviews we've had."

"He also has a book to sell which is coming out, funnily enough, at the same time as the film. It absolutely does not sensationalise anything. Anyone who sees the film will

make up their own minds about that."

The director Brian Gilbert said of Mr Holland: "I've had many conversations with him. He is simply another opinion. I listened very attentively to him. But the evidence about anyone's sexual life is largely speculative." Commenting on the voyeuristic scene, he said: "What it expresses is what

went on between Wilde and Bosie. As far as we can tell, their own sexual relationship was over very soon. Of what went on behind closed doors, there is little evidence, apart from what others witnessed at the hotel. We do know he led Oscar into rough trade."

Mr Gilbert added that a film could not convey the complete picture. "There is no

substitute for reading his work. Had he been a composer or painter, it would be easy to give evidence of his work. We were essentially trying to convey the quality of his sensibility. Wilde himself said that he put his genius into his life and only his talent into his work."

Merlin Holland, page 35

Letters record Crimean horror

BY ALAN HAMILTON

FIRST-HAND accounts of the appalling conditions suffered by British troops fighting in the Crimean War have surfaced in London, and are expected to make at least £30,000 at auction.

The war of 1854-56 ranks low among the strategic turning-points of world history but it sticks forever in the memory thanks to two writers: Tennyson and William Howard Russell, correspondent of *The Times*. The poet laureate recorded the bungling incompetence that annihilated the Light Brigade, and the war reporter uncovered the suffering that led directly to the arrival of Florence Nightingale and the birth of modern nursing.

Vivid descriptions of the conditions endured by the men caught up in a grim and costly war against Russia are contained in a collection of their letters home, assembled by the late philatelist

and postal historian Kelly Tighe, which will be sold at Spink, the auctioneers, on Tuesday.

They tell of incompetent leadership, extremes of temperature, disease and almost non-existent medical facilities. One letter, from Lieutenant Clement Henegge, a survivor of the "six hundred" in the Valley of Death at Balaklava, is unflattering of his superior officers at the Charge of the Light Brigade.

In a note to his wife in Wiltshire, Henegge wrote: "We like Cardigan and get on well with him; (Lord) Lucan is a ruffian and Sir George Brown a thundering snob who will not allow us to have any porter served out, though there are thousands of gallons of it at Varna."

The son of the Earl of Mayo wrote to his father in Ireland describing conditions at Scutari hospital. "A steamer came down

the other day with sick, not provided with shot which is always sewn up with the dead body to make it sink immediately. Consequently the bodies kept floating about when they were thrown over."

In another letter he has praise "only for Miss Florence Nightingale, who has furnished a great part of the hospital with forms, tables, tin plates, etc. I don't know what the sick would have done without her."

The collection includes one letter from W. H. Russell who, writing to a T. Angell at British Post Office headquarters, after a disastrous British attack on the Great Redan, inquired despairingly: "When sending back bearer with letters, etc. can you spare the time for a line to say if you hear anything about the cause of our failure, etc. Poor Yea, poor Crocker, poor Snodgrass. God help us."



Part of Michelangelo's black chalk study

Masterpiece by Michelangelo on sale for £4m

BY OUR ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A DRAWING by Michelangelo has appeared on the market for the first time since 1807. As one of only two of his works to have been offered in the past two decades, it is expected to fetch about £4 million at auction.

Christ and the Woman of Samaria, a black chalk study, is among a handful of Michelangelo drawings in private hands. It is being sold by a Swiss foundation established by Martin Bodmer, a noted bibliophile, shortly before his death in 1971. Measuring 17 by 13in, the study is one of the master's largest drawings.

Gregory Rubinstein, director of Old Master drawings for Sotheby's, which will be selling it in New York, described it as a monumental and poetic late work. "It is a museum-quality work, a major drawing by Michelangelo on any ground. It's a great work by one of the greatest artists who ever lived. The two main figures are remark-

able both in size and in the technical skill with which they have been developed: the figure of Christ is rapidly drawn, with bold, parallel strokes and several obvious alterations, while the woman of Samaria is much more highly finished and elaborately modelled."

Michelangelo (1475-1564), is known to have presented a drawing of the same title to his patron, the poet Vittoria Colonna, in about 1542 or 1543 — shortly after completing the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. That drawing has long been lost.

This one has a provenance that includes Cardinal Santa Croce in the 17th century. Mr Rubinstein said that no one is sure when Bodmer bought it, as there are no archives at the foundation.

Before its sale on January 28, it will be exhibited around the world, stopping in London between November 30 and December 2.

Poets use e-mail to avenge Net loss

BY HELEN RUMBLOW

POETS marked National Poetry Day yesterday with an e-mail campaign to stop the illegal reproduction of their work on the Internet, claiming they are losing fees.

Wendy Cope said at the launch of Poets Have Rights Too that she had dedicated a new poem, *The Law of Copyright*, to it. The Poetry Society will send the poem — last line, "If you read this and ignore it, I bloody well hope you get caught" — to any offenders in their electronic mail.

"What annoys me is that we are meant to be so grateful if someone bothers to reproduce our work," Cope said. "We are entitled to be paid for a photocopy, or for the Internet, or for performances."

Dylan Thomas was one of the most popular poets on the Net, even though his work was still in copyright. Chris Zieninski, of the Authors Licensing and Collecting Society, said: "It's an act of homage, but also of piracy."

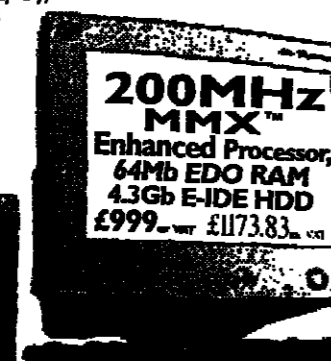
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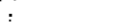
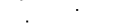
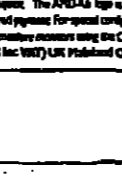
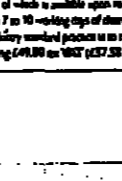
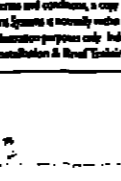
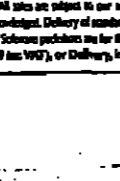
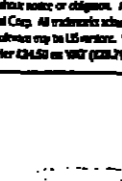
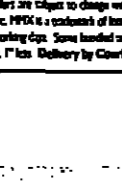
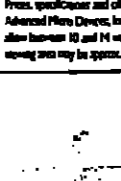
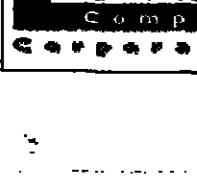
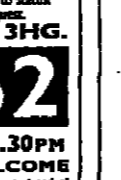
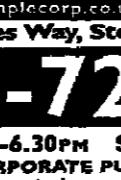
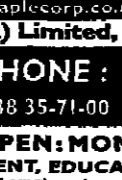
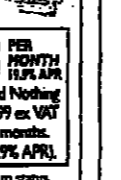
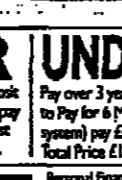
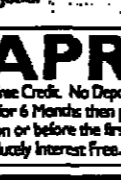
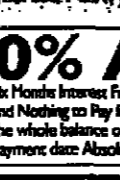
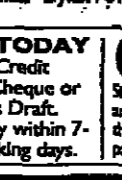
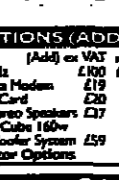
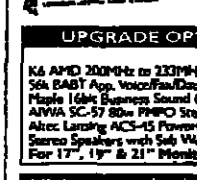
"Intel faces competition for the first time in years." Dean Takahashi, Wall Street Journal (European Edition)

"Pentium faces a beating" Steve Bower, Daily Telegraph, April 18

"AMD has stolen a march on Intel" Mark Tran, The Guardian, April 17

"For the first time, people have a choice" The Independent, May 2

"The new AMD-K6 processor has blown the competition away with its performance." Dylan Aramburo, PCMag Jive.





Lynda Roberts and Josie Russell with some of Josie's former friends from Goodnestone Primary School at the award ceremony yesterday

Teacher of the year helped Josie to talk again after attack

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

THE primary school teacher who helped ten-year-old Josie Russell to recover the power of speech after witnessing the murder of her mother and sister was named yesterday as teacher of the year.

Josie was left for dead alongside the bodies of her mother, Lin, and six-year-old sister, Megan. They had been attacked while walking home from Goodnestone Primary School, near Canterbury, in Kent, by an assailant who is still at large.

Lynda Roberts, Josie's class teacher, recorded stories and poems to play to her as she lay in hospital unable to communicate. When Josie began to recover, Mrs Roberts helped her to settle back into school.

Josie and her father, Shaun, have since moved back to their native Wales. But she was reunited with her teacher and classmates yesterday at the prize-giving ceremony in

London. Still reluctant to speak and wearing a hat to cover her injuries, Josie joined her old friends to congratulate Mrs Roberts on picking up a £10,000 prize for the school. Dr Russell said that her teacher had been the linchpin of Josie's recovery. "She was almost like a second mother."

Mrs Roberts, who is 44 and had two children of her own in Josie's class, said she had not expected her tapes to be so effective, but she knew instinctively how to handle her return to school. She had organised a tea party with Josie's classmates when she left hospital and had then tried to give her a normal school life.

"I have had a lot of special experiences in the last year that, fortunately, no other teacher has had," Mrs Roberts said. "Josie and I are just good friends. We had a really good time because Josie didn't

feel very well when she came back to school, and we had a lot of fun."

Mrs Roberts beat more than 1,000 entrants for the Disney-sponsored prize. Daryl Peek, Goodnestone's head teacher, who nominated her, said she was the best teacher she had met.

Dr Russell said his daughter did not realise that Mrs Roberts had done anything out of the ordinary, although she always liked and respected her. "She is not only a conscientious teacher, but also a caring and emotional person, who can bring out the emotional qualities of the children. That is the best possible combination for a teacher."

Mrs Roberts, who has taught at the 100-pupil school for six years, said she hoped the award would help to improve the image of teachers.

Education, page 41

Mystery as moors hide secret of who got the goats

BY SIMON DE BRUKELLES

A WHODUNNIT mystery began as villagers looked out on a moorland valley and realised that it looked even emptier than usual. More than 60 goats had been stolen from England's only wild herd.

Rumours spread over possible motives for the strange disappearance at the Valley of the Rocks on Exmoor. Some noted that the goats had been blamed for damage to gardens and accused of bawling sheep over cliffs into the sea. Others said that rustlers may have been alerted to the presence of easy meat, by publicity last month for a campaign to preserve the ancient breed which featured in *Lorna Doone*.

Local residents who had formed a Friends of the Goat society for a breeding programme said they were heartbroken. However, the truth may never be known, because police said they are powerless to investigate: the goats are not owned by anyone and therefore no crime has been committed. Until cattle trucks were reported to have been spotted on narrow lanes near the valley.

The Valley of the Rocks, near Lynton, north Devon, is a popular tourist attraction. The goats are descended from domestic animals that escaped or were abandoned by smallholders more than 200 years ago, and include the few surviving examples of a breed which dates back to neolithic times. Although many of the herd are cross-breeds, a significant number were the variety called Old English.

Numbers were kept under control through regular culls organised by Lynton Town Council, but public outcry in the 1980s led to the practice

being abandoned. Since then, the herd has grown so large that animals often venture into Lynton in search of food. Now their number has fallen from 108 to 41.

Last month, the Friends of the Goats announced an ambitious plan to find new homes for most of the herd in parks and wildlife centres. They intended to keep about 30 of the best specimens.

The Lynton Mayor Carla Sim, who is also chairwoman of the Goat Society, said that the plan might now be ruined: "We have no idea where these goats have gone. The rumour here is that they might have gone to the Midlands where they can apparently fetch a

good price, as meat, but we have no proof. There is no way they have suddenly fallen off the cliffs. If local people have taken the goats, it is very short-sighted because what we were planning would have been of great benefit to Lynton. We are worried that we may have unwittingly led to the goats' demise through the publicity they have received, and now we are looking at how we can stop any more from being taken."

Joyce Slater, the society's secretary, said: "I am heartbroken about what has happened. We have not yet been able to check which goats have disappeared, but it is possible that we have lost some of the best animals. We think the Old English goats should be classified as a rare breed and given some sort of protection."

Inspector Dave Thomas, of Devon and Cornwall police, said: "Strictly, unless there is an owner who reports something missing, we cannot investigate a case as a theft."

"We have no proof, but there is no way they have just fallen off the cliffs"



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Portillo finds wisdom in novel philosophy

A darling of the glossy books set has brought out the former minister's gentler side, writes Andrew Pierce

A YOUNG Turk of the literary world has emerged as an influence behind Michael Portillo's unexpected public conversion to a new era of sexual tolerance.

Mr Portillo, once a stormtrooper of the Thatcherite right with its disdain for single parents and homosexual relationships, has spent much of the summer reading the works of Alain de Botton.

The 27-year-old author, whose musings on the psychology of love have made him the new darling of the glossy books set, has written a critically acclaimed work on Marcel Proust, the gay French writer on society and manners: *How Proust Can Change Your Life*.

Mr de Botton said last night: "I met Michael Portillo three weeks ago and he told me that my book had made quite an impact. It turned him back to reading Proust."

"I realised that Michael Portillo is a cultured man who has thought very deeply about art, life, love and Proust. I think he has had plenty of time to reflect on life since the general election."

Having read Mr de Botton's works, including at least one

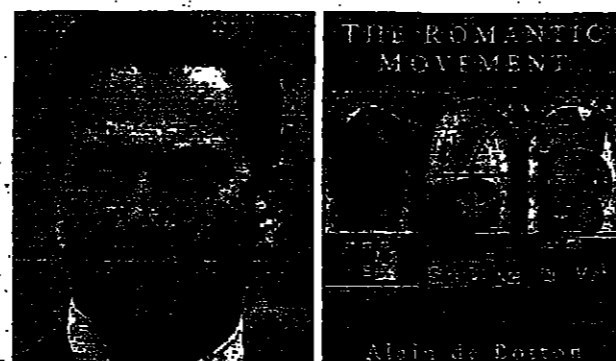
of his three novels on the agonies of twentysomething relationships, the former Defence Secretary devoured Proust's seven-volume, *In Search of Lost Time*.

"As a politician I never warned to Michael Portillo's public persona but in private he was charming and highly intelligent. It is true he never appeared tolerant when he was in government but that might be because of the way he was portrayed in the media. Maybe this is a return to what he always was. I do not think it is a conversion to sexual tolerance. I think it is a reconversion," said Mr de Botton.

Friends believe that Mr Portillo, who voted 18 in the age of consent Bill, privately supports an equal age of consent.

The change certainly took Tory delegates by surprise, who recalled Mr Portillo's tub-thumping speeches as Chief Secretary to the Treasury on the need to cut the benefit bill for single parents.

Mr Portillo has had little personal experience of the alternative family unit or divorce. He was brought up in a conventional family and is



Michael Portillo and one of his adviser's works

one of four children who are themselves happily married.

Mr Portillo, has been married to Carolyn Eadie, a City headhunter for 15 years. The ceremony was at a register office. The couple, who throw celebrated parties, wanted to save as much money as possible for the reception.

Friends of Mr Portillo made clear yesterday that his remarks when he was at the Treasury were more to do with the economic consequences of the mounting bill for single parents rather than morality.

One associate said: "He has used the time out of office to think and reconnect. He realised that the party had become so obsessed with its own problems. It became so inward looking it almost never noticed the massive changes which were going on in the world."

Since his surprise election.

defeat, Mr Portillo, who was widely seen as successor to John Major, has relaxed and seen more of his friends, many of whom are gay. He has also read the essays of Edmund Burke, the 18th century Conservative thinker, who was famously tolerant of persecuted minorities such as the Indians and slaves.

Mr de Botton, a bachelor, who recently separated from his girlfriend, went to Cambridge where he studied political history under Maurice Cowling, Mr Portillo's mentor at Peterhouse.

The Swiss-born Mr de Botton, the son of a wealthy banker, was flattered to think he may have had a hand in Mr Portillo's decision to go public with his views. "It is always nice to think that literature and an interest in the arts can help to shape a politician's views," he said.



Alain de Botton, who has written a critically acclaimed book on Marcel Proust

Straw is accused of being soft on burglars

By Polly Newton
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Shadow Home Secretary, Sir Brian Mawhinney, accused the Government yesterday of turning its back on burglary victims. He said that Labour's failure to bring in mandatory minimum sentences for repeat house-breakers proved that the party was on the side of the burglar, not the victim.

In a debate on law and order at the party conference, Sir Brian said that the previous Government had promised to implement minimum sentences for "career" burglars by 1999. He challenged Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, to do the same.

"And, if you refuse, we will continue to press you, harry you, shame you, and we will demand a vote on this matter in the Commons, so that everyone can see whether new Labour votes for a new Britain or for new burglaries," he said.

Sir Brian congratulated Mr Straw for pressing ahead with minimum sentences for those convicted of more than one sexual or violent offence, or of dealing in drugs. He also promised a constructive approach from the Tories towards government proposals to tackle youth crime, "especially as most of them are culled from our manifesto".

Sir Brian said: "Burglary may be driven by drug addiction, so we will help the Government build on our approach to reduce the amount, the effect and the consequences of drugs in our society."

He said that crime levels had fallen under the Tories, while they had risen under previous Labour administrations. The "new trends" were appalled at the idea that falling crime figures might be linked to a rise in the number of prison inmates.

Among the speakers in yesterday's debate was Jemma Nicholls, 15, who won loud applause when she condemned pop stars who took drugs. In an apparent reference to the appearance of Noel Gallagher, from Oasis, at a party given by Tony Blair this summer, she said the fight against drugs was not helped "when one of them is entertained by the Prime Minister at No. 10."

'Tolerance is a part of the Tory tradition'

By Jill Sherman
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL PORTILLO's political revival started last night with an impassioned plea to his party to shed its arrogant "vulgar" image and show more tolerance to all sections of society, particularly single mothers. His speech at a fringe meeting held by the Centre for Policy Studies set out a vision for a "compassionate and caring" Conservatism.

"We believe that children are best brought up in stable family arrangements with two parents. But we admire those many people who are doing an excellent job raising children on their own," he said.

"The important thing is that people recognise the responsibility they have when they conceive children and do all they can to provide a warm, caring and balanced home for them."

"Our society has changed. For good or ill, many people nowadays do not marry and yet head stable families with children. For a younger generation, in particular, old taboos have given way to less judgmental attitudes to the span of human relationships."

"There remain many other people to whom the new norms seem all wrong. The Tory party is conserva-

tive and not given to political correctness. Still the party never rejects the world that is. Tolerance is a part of the Tory tradition," Mr Portillo said.

Mr Portillo's message that the Tory party had to reinvent itself in order to win back popular support is clearly one the leadership intends to push. He said the party had become increasingly associated with the "most disagreeable messages" and thoughts.

"Tories were linked to harshness: thought to be uncaring about unemployment, poverty, poor housing, disability, and single parenthood, and considered indifferent to the needs of the most vulnerable."

He also acknowledged that the party's fortunes had been affected by its association with sleaze. "Sleaze disgraced us in the eyes of the public. Their perception was of corruption and unfitness for public service. Such distasteful perceptions can endure and do us damage for a long time."

"We should face these issues head on and deal with them. The last years profoundly disappointed our supporters and disgusted many others."

But he insisted that a clear line should now be drawn between sexual peccadilloes and financial misconduct, saying the latter should be a sacking offence. "William Hague is right to make a clear distinction between, on the one hand, misconduct of a financial nature or some other betrayal of public trust and, on the other hand, problems in personal life such as marital breakdown."

"A betrayal of public trust must lead to resignation and we shall watch carefully how thoroughly Labour does in fact clean out its Augean stables. But private problems and indiscretions should not normally lead to the end of a person's career."

and arms sales. We were thought to favour greed and the unqualified pursuit of the free market, with a 'devil take the hindmost' attitude."

The former MP for Enfield Southgate argued that the party was also "thought to be arrogant and out of touch". Some of it was insensitive language, some of it image. "When people looked at the composition of our party, they thought it too elderly, or too vulgar, or too out of touch in vocabulary and perceptions, or, in some other way, unfamiliar and unrepresentative."

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party's fortunes had been affected by its association with sleaze. "Sleaze disgraced us in the eyes of the public. Their perception was of corruption and unfitness for public service. Such distasteful perceptions can endure and do us damage for a long time."

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"A betrayal of public trust must lead to resignation and we shall watch carefully how thoroughly Labour does in fact clean out its Augean stables. But private problems and indiscretions should not normally lead to the end of a person's career."

"You may think less highly of someone who exhibits weakness in his private life, you may choose not to support or re-elect him, but we should not require people to be

driven from office in those circumstances."

He insisted that the Conservative message was an attractive one and would touch a chord with the majority of the public if properly explained: "Choice, aspiration, opportunity, duty and compassion."

Compassion was an essential ingredient of Conservatism but the world did not believe it, he argued, urging Tories to wear their compassion on their sleeves. He also urged Tories to develop closer relations with trade unions and business.

"There are a few Neanderthals left today in the trade union movement. But the Conservatives will want to be part of a dialogue that can include all those who genuinely want to see our business succeed, excluding only those who still want merely to ossify British industry or defend vested interests."

Mr Portillo's views on single parents were endorsed by John Maples, the Shadow Health Secretary but Iain Duncan Smith, the Shadow Social Security Secretary, attacked single-parent families, saying they were more likely to commit crime. He accused Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, of being "obsessed" with one-parent families and said a balance needed to be struck between support for them and the traditional family.

A new man? Not likely, says Thatcher

THE idea that Michael Portillo has become a new man after five months in the political wilderness was given short shrift by one visitor to the Conservative conference yesterday (Dame Margaret Thatcher).

"New man?" said Baroness Thatcher. "New man? He's the same man I've always known. The lady should know. She was

one of only a handful of people who actually saw Mr Portillo in Blackpool before he delivered his speech last night."

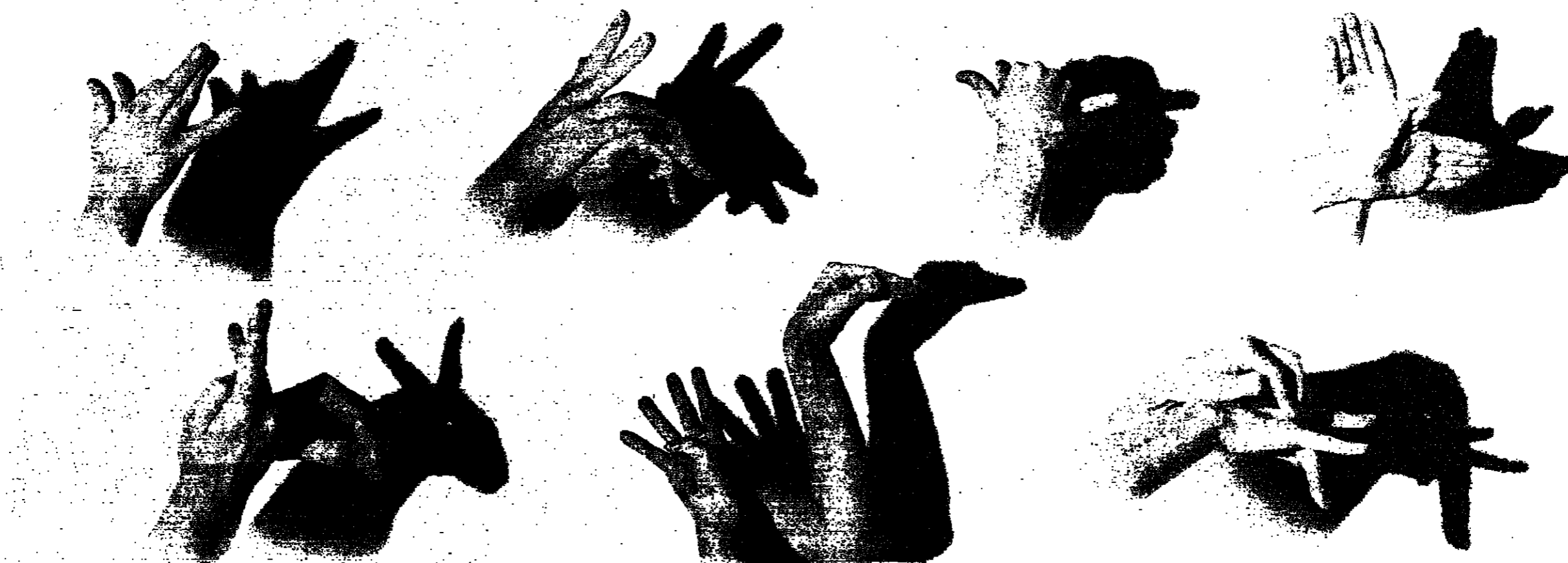
The former Defence Secretary has been in town but keeping the lowest of profiles. He slipped into the Imperial Hotel yesterday morning to see the woman to whom he has always been fiercely loyal and who regards him as a

favoured son. Mr Portillo made several warm references to the former Prime Minister in his speech and told how she had been one of the first to offer condolences on the loss of his seat.

Their discussion yesterday of what Mr Portillo was going to say clearly did not convince her that he had significantly changed his outlook. Her blunt statement that he

was still one of hers was given as she trotted through the Imperial Hotel later in the day.

Reasons for Mr Portillo's invisibility are not clear. One of the rare sightings was as he took a walk, quiff flapping, along the promenade. He might have noticed, as he gazed out to the horizon that the sea was distinctly murky. The season for clear blue water is over.



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Chips in wine upset French elite

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

FRENCH vineyards have been shaken by allegations of subterfuge and fraud in a row which has set wine producers against each other.

The cause is oak chips. Viticulturists in what the French refer to snuffily as the "new countries" use the cuttings as part of their drive to oust European products from supermarket shelves worldwide. By suspending a bag of wood chips in an aluminium container full of wine, they produce a nectar which tastes as though it has matured in an old oak barrel, they claim. This saves time, money and energy. But a chip in a vat for Californians or Australians is giving the French a chip on the shoulder.

Producers of cheap French wine would like to copy their counterparts and are prevented from doing so by a European Union ruling. Brussels is backed by elite French vineyards from regions such as Bordeaux, where there are fears that the spread of oak chips could undermine the reputation, and price, of champagne-bottled products.

"This would worry consumers," said Jérôme Quot, president of the French Institute for Quality Wines. His institute claims the Fr25 billion (£2.5 billion) global market for French wines relies on rules preventing the arrival of "unnatural" techniques in France.

But there is fierce pressure for such techniques to be accepted. Producers in lesser-known regions such as Languedoc in southern France, say they do not earn enough money to buy Fr3,000 oak barrels. "Bordeaux has agreed to review its position within two years."

Nobel stuns Italy's left-wing jester

Surprise award for theatre genius who threw down a challenge to both Catholic Church and State often putting his own life at risk

BY DAVID ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE Italian playwright and actor Dario Fo, best known for his biting satires on the establishment, for performances in the commedia dell'arte tradition and for regarding the old Italian Communist Party as too right-wing, was yesterday awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature by the Swedish Academy.

Signor Fo, 71, son of a station master, said: "I am flabbergasted." He was not alone: the theatre world was just as taken aback, particularly as Salman Rushdie and Arthur Miller had been strongly tipped to win.

In Britain at least, while Signor Fo has written more than 40 plays, he is most associated with *The Accidental Death of an Anarchist*—about a railway worker who "accidentally" falls from the window of a Milan police station—

which was written as long ago as 1970. But for many, as one critic noted, he is "the people's artist" who breaks down barriers: on one occasion, a staggering 16,000 crammed into a sports hall in Turin to see his solo performance.

Despite his delight, even Signor Fo's publisher, Michael Earley of Methuen, was shocked, however much Signor Fo is "a first-class theatrical genius." "We were never expecting this to happen," he said. He noted that the Nobel committee has often acted in mysterious ways. Salman Rushdie and Arthur Miller were strongly tipped to win, but the Nobel organisers had told Mr Earley that they would be "too predictable, too popular."

Benedict Nightingale, the critic of *The Times*, has described Signor Fo as "one of the funniest playwrights and performers alive." But news of the Nobel prize was "quite a surprise." He added: "What's interesting is that he's basically a performer. His roots go

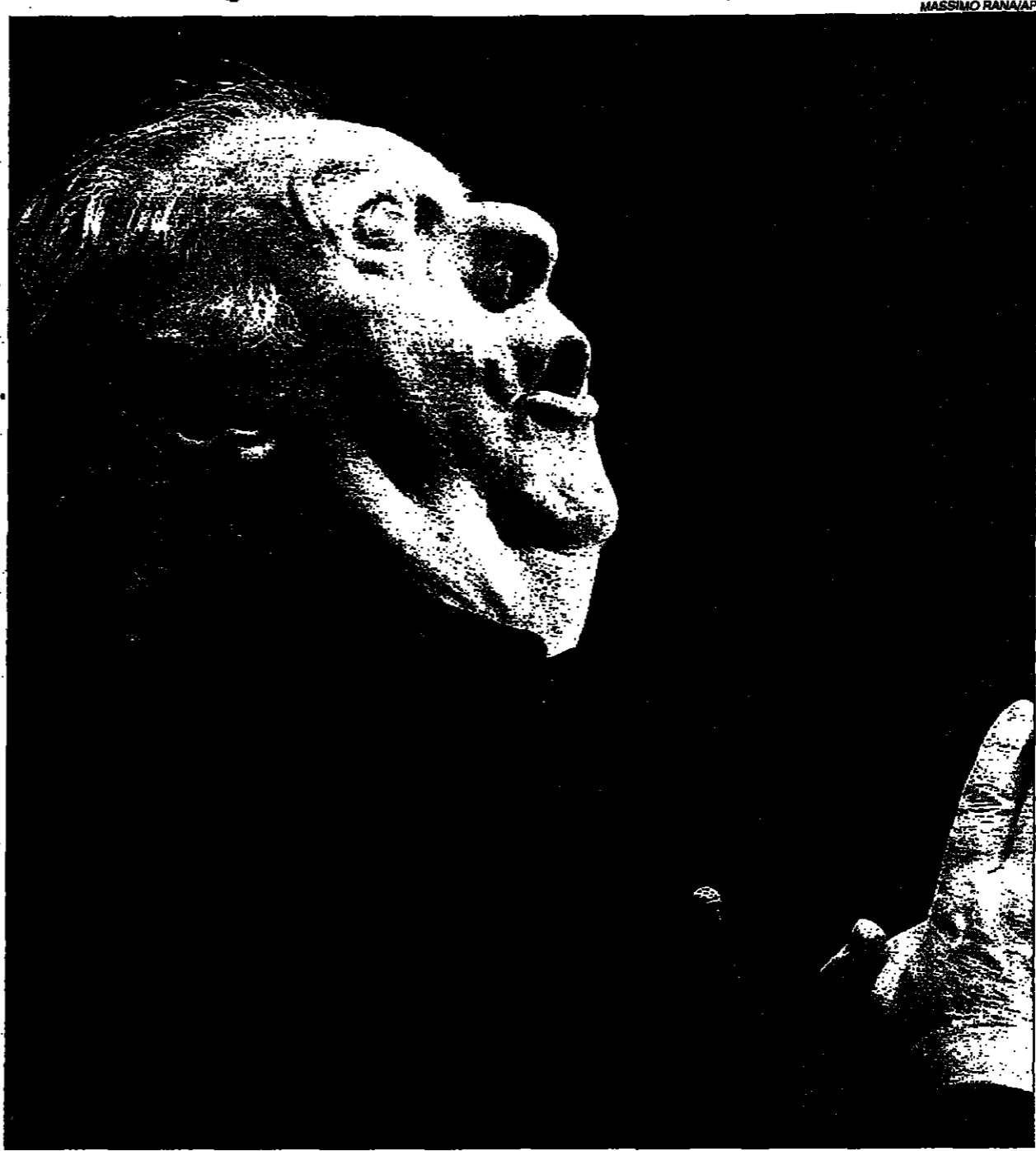
back to the commedia dell'arte tradition. He writes for himself and performs himself, sometimes with his wife. He's a brilliantly talented clown. This choice is a wayward one, it's rather lightweight."

Signor Fo's plays, which include *Carte Blanche*, *Worst Play*, have been translated into dozens of languages. He has continued to perform despite a stroke that partly blinded him last year. To say he has really lived is an understatement. During the war the playwright helped his father, a member of the Italian Resistance, to smuggle Allied soldiers across the border to neutral Switzerland. He has also suffered for his art: it is said he has been jailed, beaten and threatened with assassination and had homes and theatres bombed and burnt.

Humour is his weapon. His political outlook clearly is influenced by his background. His one-man *Mistero Buffo* is one of his masterpieces: its lampooning of the Roman Catholic Church through a retelling of the Gospels premiered in 1969—won him worldwide acclaim, as well as censure from Rome. The televised version, recorded and screened in 1977, was condemned by the Vatican as "the most blasphemous show in the history of television."

He has collaborated as both writer and performer on many of his works with his wife, Franca Rame, once called "Italy's Rita Hayworth". In 1968, they established a non-profit-making troupe with backing from the Italian Communist Party with a mission to entertain the working classes.

Signor Fo wrote plays for people in factories and workers' clubs, but found them inspiring audiences internationally. In 1990 he and his wife founded the political collective, La Chiocciola. Milan, writing plays such as *Trumpets and Raspberries*, *The Pope and the Witch* and *Archangels Don't Play Pinball*, satirising and savaging the Church, the State, corruption and drug addiction. One critic noted in 1992: "Political fervour may be on the wane in the 1990s, but Fo's plays manage to be as popular with regular theatre audiences as with his faithful followers. Legalisation of drugs is not a hot issue in this country, but the corruption of those in power is always with us."



Dario Fo at a Milan theatre: "One of the funniest playwrights and performers. He is a brilliantly talented clown"

Signor Fo once said: "I believe in making people look at problems through comedy. You can make an audience laugh just for the sake of having fun, or you can make them laugh about social subjects, the establishment, the clichés around us. I prefer the last way. If you can make people laugh, you can open up their minds." He told *The Times*: "You remember things much better through laughter than through tears."

□ Rome. The Vatican said it was "stunned" by the award. *L'Espresso*, the Vatican's newspaper, said: "The Nobel prize jury members have lately awarded to lesser known authors, wrongly considered to be lesser works. But giving the prize to someone who is also the author of questionable works is beyond all imagination."

The Swedish Academy which awards the prize said Signor Fo had been selected for work which "emulates the jesters of the Middle Ages in scourging authority and upholding the dignity of the downtrodden."

But in Warsaw the 1980 Nobel Literature Prize laureate, Czeslaw Milosz, said he would have preferred the prize to go to Jean Kross of Estonia or Tomas Transtromer of Sweden and described Signor Fo as "someone who is completely unknown to me."

Mr Milosz's comments were mild by comparison with the reaction of another Polish writer, Gustaw Herling-Grudzinski, who said the decision to honour Signor Fo "definitely compromised" the Swedish Academy. (AFP)

WORLD IN BRIEF

Fear for whales at beach

Wellington: Volunteers were waiting last night to see whether 45 beached whales would beach themselves again on the Karikari Bay beach in northern New Zealand (Cathie Bell writes). Of the pod of nearly 100 pilot whales that were stranded, the 45 had been encouraged back to sea. Photograph, page 24

Damages call

Singapore: Goh Chok Tong, the Prime Minister, is seeking higher damages than the £12,000 awarded in a libel case, Joshua Jeyaretnam, the defendant and veteran Opposition Leader said. (Reuters)

No soft soap

New York: Ellen DeGeneres, America's first openly lesbian soap-opera star, is threatening to quit *Ellen*, her hit show, because the ABC network is to flash an "adult content" warning on the screen.

Kidnap arrest

Potsdam: Two former Soviet soldiers who had served in East Germany were held on suspicion of kidnapping and killing Matthias Hintze, 20. They had allegedly demanded a £350,000 ransom. (Reuters)

Gambia crash

Banjul: A tourist plane from Spain crashed in the West African state of The Gambia, killing eight of the nine aboard, officials said. Seven passengers were understood to be Germans. (Reuters)

Rat house razed

Tampa, Florida: A house where a woman kept 1,200 rats as pets was demolished after complaints about the smell. The rats, killed the day before, were "very domesticated," an official said. (AP)

Oodles of noodle

Beijing: Hu Shuxia, a hotel chef, beat five others in a television contest by hand-pulling a continuous noodle 2,940m (9,704ft) long from 1kg (2.2lb) of dough. Xinhua news agency said. (AFP)

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Iceland rattles China at dinner table

FROM JAMES PRINGLE
IN BEIJING

ICELAND (population 268,000) has become a mouse that roared in a diplomatic dispute with China (1.2 billion) over who came to dinner.

Beijing warned Reykjavik yesterday that it had "hurt the feelings of the Chinese people" by allowing a private, unofficial visit by Lien Chan, the Vice-President of Taiwan, this week.

"The Icelandic Government has paid no attention to China's position, and the bilateral relationship has been seriously damaged," Shen Guofang, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, said yesterday. "This is interference in China's internal affairs and Iceland will be held responsible."

Beijing is apparently enraged because Mr Lien Chan, also scheduled to visit Spain and Austria, has, at the start of his two-week European trip, had dinner in Reykjavik with David Oldson, the Prime Minister.

Hjalmar Hannesson, the Icelandic Ambassador to Beijing, said China had made a "very strong" protest over what he called a "private, unofficial visit". He said: "During the Prime Minister's dinner, the two sides talked about business and tourism. We get about 2,000 tourists a year from Taiwan."

The ambassador said he did not know what the consequences would be, though reports from Reykjavik indicated that the Chinese Embassy has cancelled contracts worth millions of dollars to purchase fish and other products.

Mr Shen said: "No matter what the form of Lien Chan's visit, whether it is called a holiday or transit through the territory, in fact it has official colours."

Cabinet clash over Mossad murder squad

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN JERUSALEM

DAVID LEVY, Israel's Foreign Minister, said yesterday that he was considering resigning over the "damaging" attempt to assassinate a Hamas leader in Jordan last month, as new details emerged about the bungled Mossad operation.

Asked on Israel Radio how close he had come to leaving Benjamin Netanyahu's Government, Mr Levy, who claims that he was not consulted on the bid to send secret agents to kill Khaled Meshaal with a mystery toxin, said: "Almost 50-50". He said he was "still weighing things up and considering the balance".

The Tel Aviv newspaper *Yediot Aharonot*, stung by criticism that the media had soft-pedalled coverage, pledges in today's edition to reveal the whole story, including details of a "secret meeting" at which it was approved, details of who gave the orders, and why a chemical weapon was used.

Using Israeli and Jordanian sources, *The Times* has put together a timetable of events in a scandal which nearly sabotaged the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty and prompted King Hussein to declare during a phone call with President Clinton that Mr Netanyahu was "an impossible man to deal with".

July 30: Emergency Israeli Cabinet meeting after suicide bombs in Jerusalem's crowded Mahane Yehuda market kill 16 Israelis, decides to sanction attacks on Hamas military leaders. According to two of those present, the motion did not mention names or set constraints.

September 19: Two and possibly four Israeli Mossad agents travelling on forged Canadian passports check into Amman's five-star Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel, an unlikely venue as it is favoured by the press and Jordanian intelligence.

September 25: When Mr Meshaal arrives at his Am-



Netanyahu: sent poison formula and antidote

man office, two men are outside, one dark and muscular, the other bearded and fair. Both look like foreigners. The bearded man approaches the Hamas politburo chief and sprays or injects a toxin from a lead-coloured instrument wrapped in tape that makes a loud popping sound. Mr Meshaal feels a sensation "like an electric shock" in his spine and is rushed to hospital with severe respiratory problems. One doctor said he had a maximum of 48 hours to live. Two attackers are caught after a clash with Mr Meshaal's bodyguard. Four other members of the hit team take refuge in the Israeli Embassy. Israeli officials said that Mr Netanyahu is stunned and sends an antidote which saves Mr Meshaal's life. Jordanian

US signals new accord

Washington: The Clinton Administration is holding out hope of an agreement next week on a Palestinian airport and seaport. The drive was launched at a summit between Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian Authority President. President Clinton said the first summit in eight months "occurred not a moment too soon". (Reuters)

officials say that, if he had died, the Mossad men would have been tried publicly and hanged.

September 26: Mr Meshaal running a temperature of 102F (38C) and not responding to treatment. Intense telephone activity between Amman and Jerusalem with Jordan threatening dire consequences unless way found of saving his life.

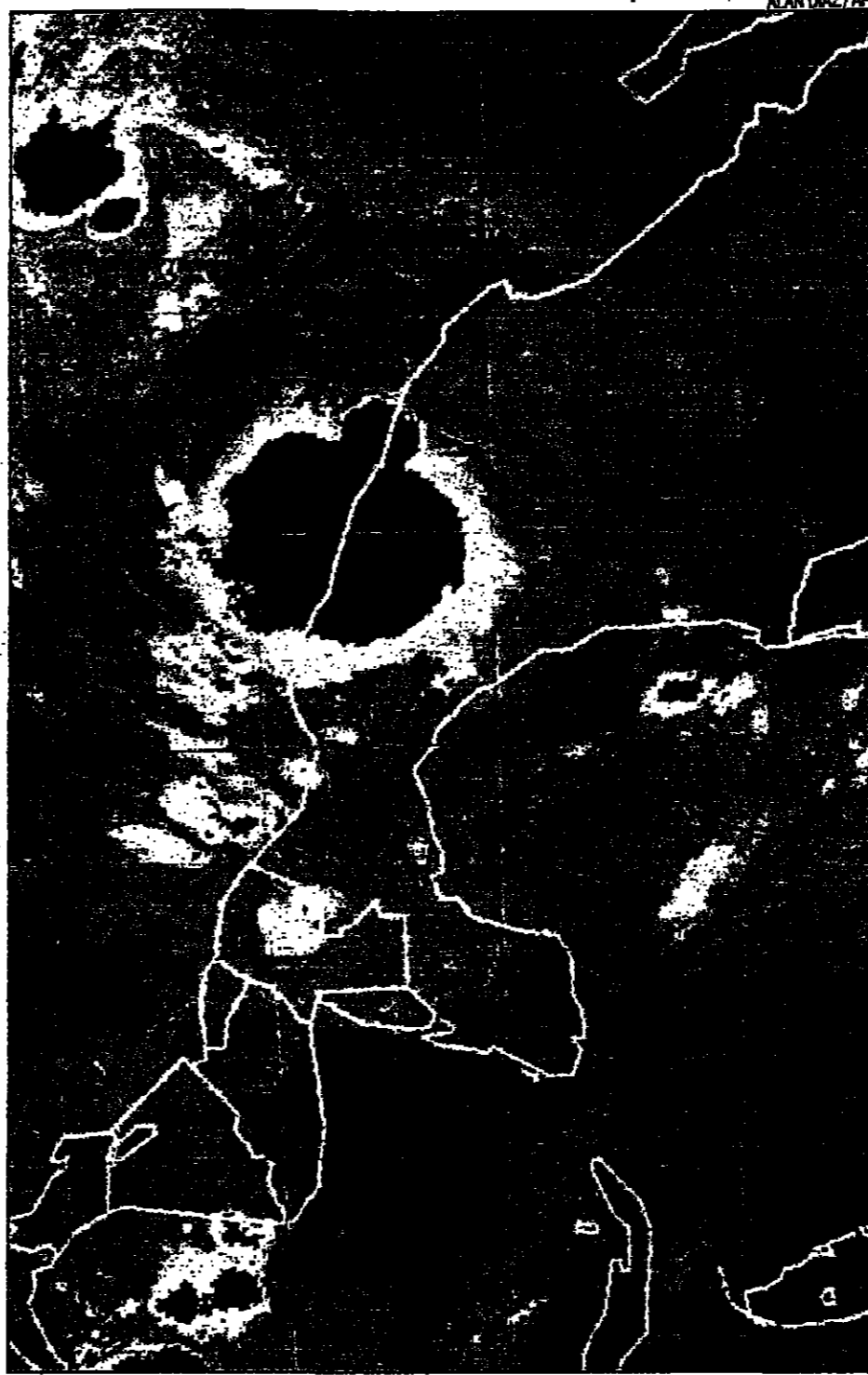
September 27: King Hussein phones Mr Clinton and explodes with frustration about Mr Netanyahu, claiming it is unclear whether the syringe containing the antidote is a trick and contains more poison. Message relayed to Israel and Mr Netanyahu decides to send written chemical formula to the King. Late on Saturday the formula is presented by Ephraim Halevy, the Israeli Ambassador to the European Union and former deputy head of Mossad. In return, the monarch permits him to smuggle the four agents in the embassy back to Israel.

September 28: Mr Netanyahu goes to Jordan to cool the situation, although it is clear King Hussein will not see him. He travels with Ariel Sharon, the Infrastructure Minister, and Yitzhak Mordechai, the Defence Minister. They hold a tense meeting with Crown Prince El Hassan bin Talal, the only Arab leader to speak fluent Hebrew. He accuses Israel of attempting to destabilise the Hashemite Kingdom. Puts view held by many Arabs that Mossad has a reputation for excellence, and such amateurish failure must be deliberate. Israelis persuade him "it was cock-up rather than conspiracy".

October 4: Mr Sharon completes a deal whereby up to 70 Arab prisoners, on top of already freed Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, will be part of package allowing two Mossad men home.

October 8: The King phones Mr Netanyahu and offers to patch up ties.

Leading article, page 21



An enhanced satellite image of Hurricane Pauline when the eye was just inland near Acapulco yesterday. The storm is generating sustained winds up to 100mph

Hurricane claims 15 lives

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

ONE of the fiercest storms ever to hit Mexico's Pacific coast, Hurricane Pauline, battered many towns and villages yesterday, leaving at least 15 people dead and a trail of destruction.

A Red Cross spokesman said a woman, 22, and her three-year-old child were swept to their deaths as waves up to 48 deep raged through the resort of Acapulco, sweep-

ing away several cars. "I've lived in Acapulco all my life, and never seen anything like this. This is a serious situation, and people are frightened," said Amado Ramirez, a local reporter.

All flights into the resort, about 175 miles southwest of Mexico City and with a population of a million, were cancelled, but a large cruise ship, the *Veendam*, with 2,000

tourists and crew on board, sailed from the city's port late on Wednesday in spite of raging seas.

Sheets of rain and gale-force winds also swelled rivers in other areas of Mexico. Flood water tore through ramshackle homes, felled trees and knocked out roads and electricity. Several people were reported to have been washed away.

Queen's dated trip lacks the magic of Diana

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS
IN LAHORE

THE QUEEN heads to the hills of Murree in Punjab today for a weekend retreat with the Duke of Edinburgh after a lacklustre state visit that most Pakistanis have hardly noticed. The formula of tree planting, award ceremonies and general speeches has seemed dated and spiritless, despite wide and friendly coverage in the local press.

The trip has been a far cry from the near-hysteria that greeted visits by Diana, Princess of Wales, whose position made her less constrained by the pomp required and expected of a visiting head of state. Lack of grassroots involvement has defined the visit, the Queen's first to Pakistan since 1961, which by all accounts was more memorable because she was able to drive through crowd-lined streets in an open car. To try that now would invite an assassin's bullet.

The extraordinary security, which stifled any attempt at spontaneity, was perhaps unavoidable because of Pakistan's violent gun culture. Many extremist groups would consider it a coup to harm the Queen, if only for the publicity. Karachi alone averages more than 1,000 political and ethnic killings a year.

Not only were people kept at bay this week, they were kept away entirely, and few were able to see anything of the Queen, save for what was in the papers and on television. She drove through almost empty Lahore streets last night, which were lined by policemen. The security presence paralysed the centre of this frenetic city to ensure she came to no harm.

Banners across the road from the airport proclaiming "Long live Pak-UK friendship" seemed what they were: a bureaucratic gesture by the Punjab state government without any significant sign of involvement by local people. It has been a week of dignitaries gathering beneath crystal chandeliers of restricted meetings and ceremonies rehearsed to the last drumbeat.

Senator furious at inquiry on executions

FROM JAMES BONE
IN NEW YORK

A UNITED NATIONS investigation into the death penalty in the United States has provoked a furious reaction from a Republican senator who controls the purse strings for paying off Washington's debt to the organisation.

Jesse Helms, the powerful chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, denounced as "an absurd charade" and an "intentional insult" a visit to the United States by a Senegalese investigator for the UN Human Rights Commission.

Waly Ndiaye, a former Amnesty International official now serving as the UN special rapporteur on extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions, spent two weeks interviewing death row inmates and meeting state officials as part of an inquiry into capital punishment and deaths in police custody.

He is only the second UN human rights investigator to visit the United States, a country which routinely pushes for vigorous human rights investigations elsewhere in the world.

Mr Ndiaye's visit did not sit well with Senator Helms, who holds the key to any compromise on paying off Washington's \$1.5 billion (£931 million) debt to the UN. In an irate letter to the American Ambassador at UN headquarters, he described Mr Ndiaye's inquiry as "a perfect example of why the United Nations is looked upon with such disdain by the American people".

Mr Ndiaye expressed surprise at his frosty reception in America, particularly because he was part of an earlier American-backed UN team that sought to uncover human rights abuses in the former Zaire.

Mr Ndiaye's investigation was prompted by the rise in the number of executions in America, reports of racism in use of the death penalty and the execution of mentally retarded prisoners and those convicted as minors.

US cyclist bumped by woman motorist shoots her dead

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

A CYCLIST who was yesterday bumped by a car outside Washington drew a pistol and shot the driver dead.

The cyclist approached the blue Honda Accord at a crossroads in Langley Park, Maryland, and fired into the head of Joy Enriquez, 19, who died instantly.

Ms Enriquez, a student, had spent the day at her parents' home before driving in rush-hour traffic to a lecture at Montgomery College. Turning left at an intersection, she appeared to knock the cyclist off his bicycle. According to witnesses, as she pulled over to check if he was injured, the

cyclist shouted and swore at her before shooting her.

He then abandoned his cycle and was chased on foot by police. A man, identified as Alejandro Grant, 26, was arrested ten minutes later and was held without bail on a charge of first-degree murder.

"The guy fell off, she just tapped the wheel on the back," one witness told *The Washington Post*. "It was an accident. She pulled over immediately and they had words. He fell off onto his back but got right up. It could have been me. I can understand he was angry and upset, but you don't go and

shoot somebody." Road rage is a common problem in America, but the National Crime Prevention Council said it was rare for people to be killed in an incident such as that in Maryland.

The council blamed the shooting on a combination of factors, including a lack of any sense of community and the availability of handguns. "A major part of the equation is the sense of anonymity and that, if someone violates what you deem to be acceptable norms of behaviour, you are entitled to take the law into your own hands," said the council's Jean O'Neil.

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Prodi offers to quit as Marxist allies desert

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

ITALY was thrown into political turmoil yesterday as Professor Romano Prodi, the centre-left Prime Minister, offered his resignation to President Scalfaro after the refusal of his Communist allies to back him in parliament over the 1998 budget.

The President asked Signor Prodi to stay on in a caretaker capacity until "a solution can be found". If the Prime Minister is unable to continue in power by forming a minority administration, the most likely options are new elections, a caretaker government to help Italy to enter economic and monetary union, or a grand coalition.

The move places a serious question mark over Italy's Herculean efforts to join the European single currency, and threatens to bring an abrupt and premature end to the country's first left-wing government since the Second World War. President Scalfaro is known to be keen to avoid new elections at a time when Italy is grappling not only with its European policy but also with economic austerity and constitutional reform.

The Prodi Government, which includes the Party of the Democratic Left, or former Communists, who were excluded from government for 50 years, came to power 18 months ago after the last elections in April 1996. Signor Prodi, an economics professor from Bologna, vowed not only to take Italy into the single



Scalfaro: keen to avoid fresh elections

currency by cutting the budget deficit and reducing inflation — targets which Italy has come very close to meeting — but also to put an end to unstable "revolving-door" governments by reforming the constitution and moving towards a "normal democracy" with left and right blocs.

Although the coalition of centrist and left-wing parties put together by Signor Prodi had a comfortable majority in the Senate, it had to rely from the outset in the Lower House on the 35 MPs of Communist Refoundation, a hardline Marxist party opposed to cuts in welfare spending.

Yesterday, despite days of behind-the-scenes persuasion and arm-twisting, the Communists, led by Fausto Bertinotti, announced that they could not vote for the budget because it "failed to do enough to protect pensioners and the unemployed". Signor Prodi pre-empted certain de-

feat in the vote at the end of the debate by going to the Quirinale Palace to offer to resign.

The Prime Minister had offered to move towards a statutory 35-hour working week and to create jobs in disadvantaged areas such as the South. But he insisted on £1.86 billion of welfare spending cuts, including reductions in state support for pensions, which accounts for more than 17 per cent of gross national product, the highest rate in Europe. "The disequilibrium in the pensions sector must be resolved in a definitive manner," he told the chamber.

He also insisted on privatisation of the telecommunications and energy sectors, both anathema to the Communists, although he hinted that profits would be invested in job creation.

Silvio Berlusconi, the media tycoon and leader of the Centre Right opposition, said the only "serious solution" was a grand coalition. A cross-party administration, he said, was "the most certain way" for Italy to enter Europe, overhaul the economy and carry out reforms. Opposition aides said that the Centre Right would not want Signor Prodi to continue if a centre-right coalition were formed.

Last night, Giorgio Napolitano, the Treasury Under-Secretary, said: "This is an idiotic crisis. Nothing is compromised for the entry into Europe."

The withdrawal of Communist support appears to signal the end of Signor Prodi's



Romano Prodi in parliament in Rome yesterday as the hardline Communist Refoundation announced it was withdrawing support to his Government

dream of ruling for a full five-year term "on a programme of European commitment abroad and social justice at home", as he put it during the budget debate. Yesterday he spoke calmly but wearily, appealing several times in vain to Signor Bertinotti with

the air of an idealistic academic who had given of his best for a year and a half but had finally fallen foul of the intrigues and instabilities of traditional Italian coalition politics.

He said on taking power that he had "broken the

mould" of Italian postwar history by forming a broad left-wing alliance. But the fatal flaw from the beginning was the alliance's illusion of a parliament majority, masking its dependence on intransigent Marxists with whom in reality it had little in common.

Papon 'felt pain when he learnt fate of deportees'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN BORDEAUX

MAURICE PAPON, the accused French war criminal, suffered cardiac pains yesterday outside the Bordeaux court where he is on trial for deporting more than 1,500 Jews to their deaths in the Second World War, his lawyer said.

M Papon, 87, who suffers from heart disease, was given medication and examined by a court doctor who declared that he had recovered sufficiently. His lawyer, Jean-Marc Varaut, said the heart pains had been caused by the stress of the three-hour afternoon hearing and the heat inside the court.

The evidence of M Papon's apparently mounting frailty came just hours after M Varaut's opening salvo in the case, "begging" for the immediate release of his ailing client, and insisting that the charges of crimes against humanity be dropped.

As the court continued to deliberate over whether M Papon should be released on bail during the trial or hospitalised, M Varaut said the ageing former bureaucrat had no chance of receiving a fair trial in modern France. "The trial cannot continue," he said, claiming the case violates the European Convention on Human Rights requiring that trials be held "within a reasonable period".

While denouncing the "unfair" prosecution, M Varaut also introduced an unexpected note of contrition, emphasising the "poignant pain" felt by the former senior official of the pro-Nazi Vichy regime when he learnt of the fate of Jews deported from France to Nazi death camps. M Varaut said M Papon had expressed those senti-

ments in a television interview before the trial, but that these had been "censored" and were never broadcast — a sign, the lawyer said, of the weight of public opinion ranged against M Papon.

"Maurice Papon wants, we want, the civil plaintiffs want, to end together the mourning for this terrible era, when it was harder to know one's duty, than to follow it... In spite of himself, through his job and his sense of duty, Maurice Papon set out on the path of suffering," M Varaut declared.

In a flash of anger, when asked to comment, M Papon told the court that his opinions could be found by "rummaging through the rubbish bins" of a television station that had interviewed him before the trial.

While conceding M Papon's pain, M Varaut continued to paint him as a dedicated civil servant who remained at his post and did his duty. "To resign would have been to desert," he said.

Two court-appointed medical experts examined M Papon in his cell at Gradiignan jail on Wednesday, after his lawyer gave a warning that M Papon could die if kept in detention, and declared the facilities inadequate given "the gravity of his illness". They recommended that he be moved to a coronary unit in a nearby hospital and kept under guard for the rest of the trial. The court will decide whether to act on those recommendations today.

The court will issue a verdict next Wednesday on M Varaut's demand that the case be dropped, but there is almost no chance the trial will be called off.

Juppé flat in Paris auctioned

FROM SUSAN BELL
IN PARIS

THE luxurious city-owned Paris flat illegally rented by Alain Juppé, France's former Prime Minister, at a vastly reduced rent has been sold at auction to an anonymous buyer for Fr7.1 million (£740,000).

M Juppé was forced to move out of the six-room duplex in the wealthy Saint Germain des Prés district two years ago after the public scandal surrounding the corruption allegations.

Bidding was fierce for the flat which almost toppled a Prime Minister, but Lot 72 110 belonging to the City of Paris was eventually snapped up by a French buyer who paid well over the market rate. M Juppé was Deputy Mayor of Paris in charge of the city's finances when he began renting the elegant flat in the best part of town at 40 per cent below the market rate — courtesy of the City of Paris.

Dilemma for Blair over death penalty debate at summit

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN STRASBOURG

BRITISH discomfort over abolishing the death penalty will be on display in Strasbourg today when Tony Blair joins Presidents Yeltsin, Chirac and the leaders of 37 other European nations at a summit devoted to bolstering democracy and the rule of law from Vladivostok to Lisbon.

A call for an end to capital punishment in peacetime is among a string of grand declarations to be endorsed by the Council of Europe at the summit, only the second in the 48-year history of the West's oldest club of democracies.

The Prime Minister is expected to use his speech, made on the same day as William Hague's at the Conservative conference, to project Britain as an example of democracy and humanitarian values. He is likely to confirm the Government's plan to incorporate the European Human Rights Convention into British law, ending an anomaly that has served to multiply British cases before the Strasbourg court. The move is being

welcomed as a contrast to the often hostile stance of the previous Conservative administration.

However, parliamentary tradition will require delicate verbal footwork when Mr Blair joins the chorus against the death penalty. Britain is one of half a dozen member states which have not signed Protocol Six of the Convention, outlawing executions. Though scrapped for murder in 1965, the penalty still exists in theory for treason, piracy and certain military offences.

The fact that the Prime Minister cannot promise to sign the protocol without parliamentary approval is embarrassing at a time when the Council is busy fostering the rule of democracy among its swelling ranks of former communist members. The Council is pressing Mr Yeltsin to enact the protocol despite opposition at home. "Britain's position doesn't make it easy when we are telling the Russians that they must ignore their parliament," said a council official.

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When sexual stereotype meets Just William

I cannot get through winter without that one elusive garment



I SOUGHT it with thimbles. I sought it with care... I pursued it, like lost love, through the shopping streets of London and Oxford and Canterbury. In the end, I'd given up all hope of finding it and was saying to myself, Oh well, it doesn't really matter, I suppose. I can get through the winter without one.

Only of course it does really matter, and in fact I am going to spend from now until the spring collections *minding* about this glaring absence in my wardrobe. It's not even as though it is the sort of thing you can run up for yourself on a wet Sunday afternoon.

But then, as I drifted through Selfridges on some quite different errand (probably my other great unresolved shopping quest — the hunt for the fugitive Tinky Winky doll, without which my goddaughter can never grow up to be a fully rounded human being), the Kindly Ones who watch over fashion victims steered me towards the Warehouse concession — and there it was. In my size.

Hardly daring to breathe, in case I alerted the determined-looking girl who was already riffling through the rail, I crept up on it as though it were the last surviving example of an all-but-extinct species — and pounced. Mine, all mine. The elusive grey flannel bustier.

I haven't actually worn it yet, mind you. What do you wear a grey flannel bustier with? And where? I am not sure how it would play in the office — it does rather expose

the Upper Torso — and it seems a shade grand for the parent teachers' association barbecue... But the point is, now I have it safely captive in the cupboard, I can afford to contemplate these questions at my leisure. In the meantime, every so often, I open the wardrobe door, look at it hanging there, and *gloat*.

Now, I know the word Bustier conjures up all sorts of visions — most of them involving purple satin, and nylon lace, and having to take your husband's little birthday inspiration back to the shop and ask if they can exchange it for something a bit less excitable in cotton interlock.

And of course the words Grey Flannel conjure up a set of quite other images: the baggy shorts favoured by a certain sort of rather terrifying

small boy, for example (invariably accessorised with those striped elastic belts that do up with a little metal serpent, and an heroic set of scabs on each bony knee). Also, the frightful wrapover games skirts in which one spent hours of myopic teen-aged misery, being bellowed at by the Captain of Hockey.

But such is the charming alchemy of fashion that someone, somewhere in the Warehouse design team took a notion to mix up an elderly sexual stereotype with a material unaffectionately associated with one's schooldays. And from the combination arose something so witty and elegant and redolent of *haute couture* that grown-up women are prepared to pursue it all over England.

Mine, all mine — the elusive grey flannel bustier



Photographer: LUCY FITTER
Stylist: Deborah Brett
Hair: Cim Mahony
Make-up: Jochen Fuchs
Model: Sara-Li

Top: Wool trousers, £50 and matching bustier, £35 both by Warehouse, 19-21 Argyll Street W1, 0171-278 3491. Red suede stiletto boots, £275 by Gina, 189 Sloane Street SW1, 0171-235 2932. Red and black beaded choker, £180 by Erickson Beamon, 38 Elizabeth Street SW1, 0171-259 0202

Bottom left: Wide leg trousers, £160 by Max Mara, 32 Sloane Street SW1, 0171 287 3434. Grey beaded camisole top, £38 by Warehouse. Rib tie cardigan with cream fake fur collar, £210 by John Richmond at Harrods.

Knightsbridge SW1. National inquiry number: 0171-978 5278. Porcupine hair quill, £155 by Erik Halley at Erickson Beamon

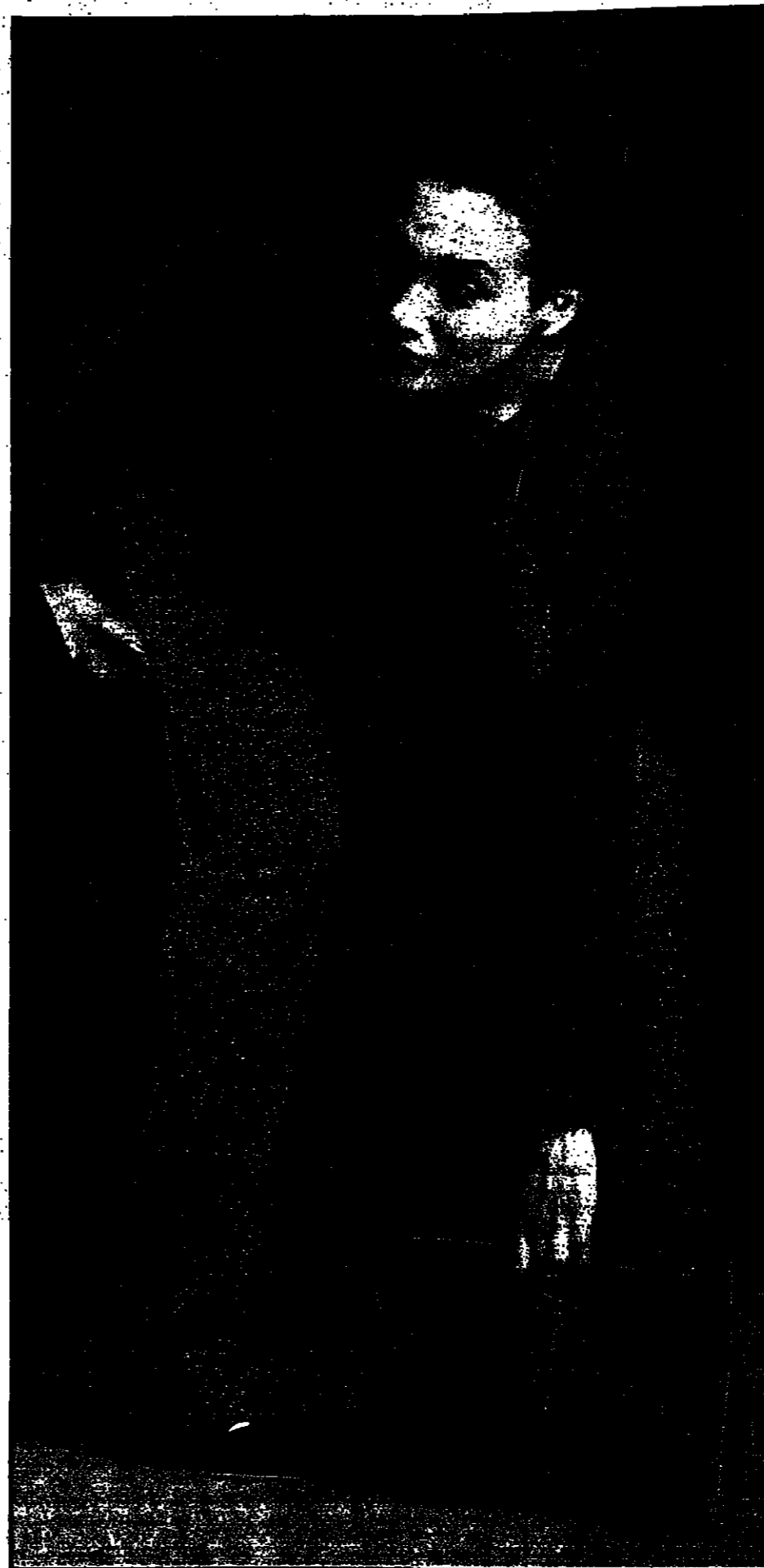
Oasis, national inquiry number: 01865-881 986. Gold leaf hair comb, £150 by Van Der Straeten at Erickson Beamon.

Main picture: Grey trousers, £199 to order from Cerutti 1881, 106 New Bond Street W1, 0171-495 5880. Red

ribbed crossover top, £125 by Plein Sud at Harrods, 0171-730 1234. Black patent booties, £250 by Ernesto Episto at Russell & Bromley. Grey snakeskin clutch bag, £225 by Russell & Bromley. Red and black long beaded earrings, £25 by Erickson Beamon

Rhapsody in grey

Grey is to this autumn what brown was to last. So no wardrobe should be without a pair of grey flannels, says Style Editor Grace Bradberry



THE BIG SQUEEZE

It might be agony, but it beats dieting: Style on the return of corsets in the quest for an hourglass figure

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Why gilded youth must pay its way

Let Oxbridge charge students full fees, urges Terence Kealey

Oxford and Cambridge claim that they are about to face a cataclysmic decline as centres of teaching and research because the Government is threatening to withhold the college fees. These two universities' claims should be dismissed as special pleading. Of course the colleges should be preserved, but they should be genuinely privatised.

The Government now pays Oxford and Cambridge some £5,000 in fees per student per year, compared to £3,000 at other universities. This £2,000 supplement supports the colleges. Believing that this anomaly is unjust, the Labour Government is proposing to withhold the extra money. Ministers say their proposals are based on common justice. Oxbridge colleges are already rich, their undergraduates are among the most privileged on the planet, so why should the taxpayer offer special subsidies to this gilded youth?

The Government's case is morally unanswerable. About half of all Oxbridge undergraduates were educated in private schools, where annual fees are greatly in excess of £2,000. A boarding school education now costs £7,800-£13,500 a year; at a day school the range is £3,750-£9,300. Moreover, many "state-educated" undergraduates were in fact educated privately until GCSEs, only taking their A levels at sixth-form colleges. Many other Oxbridge undergraduates come from the surviving grammar schools, which tend to serve the more prosperous parts of the country. It is easy to see that most parents could pay college fees of say £3,000 a year per student, which would leave plenty of money over to cross-subsidise the children of the genuinely poor.

The debates over these fees have thrown up a chilling undertone. Some academics have argued for an even freer market, suggesting that each university should be able to charge whatever fees its students will bear. But ministers have confirmed that they will not allow this. Our universities are so stretched that essential repairs and essential equipment are being neglected, yet so unfree is higher education that it may not set its own fees, even to students who could afford them. What else will this Government now forbid — the teaching of subjects with no practical application? Ancient languages or theoretical studies? Or will capital-intensive sciences be treated as luxuries?

These are not futile fears. During the late 1980s, Margaret Thatcher personally vetoed a £1 million State-funded research study into the sexual habits of the nation, a study that Aids researchers needed, because she found the topic distasteful. It was the privately-funded Wellcome Trust which saved that project. Academic freedom goes hand-in-hand with economic freedom. Government funding for our universities is a relatively recent phenomenon. The

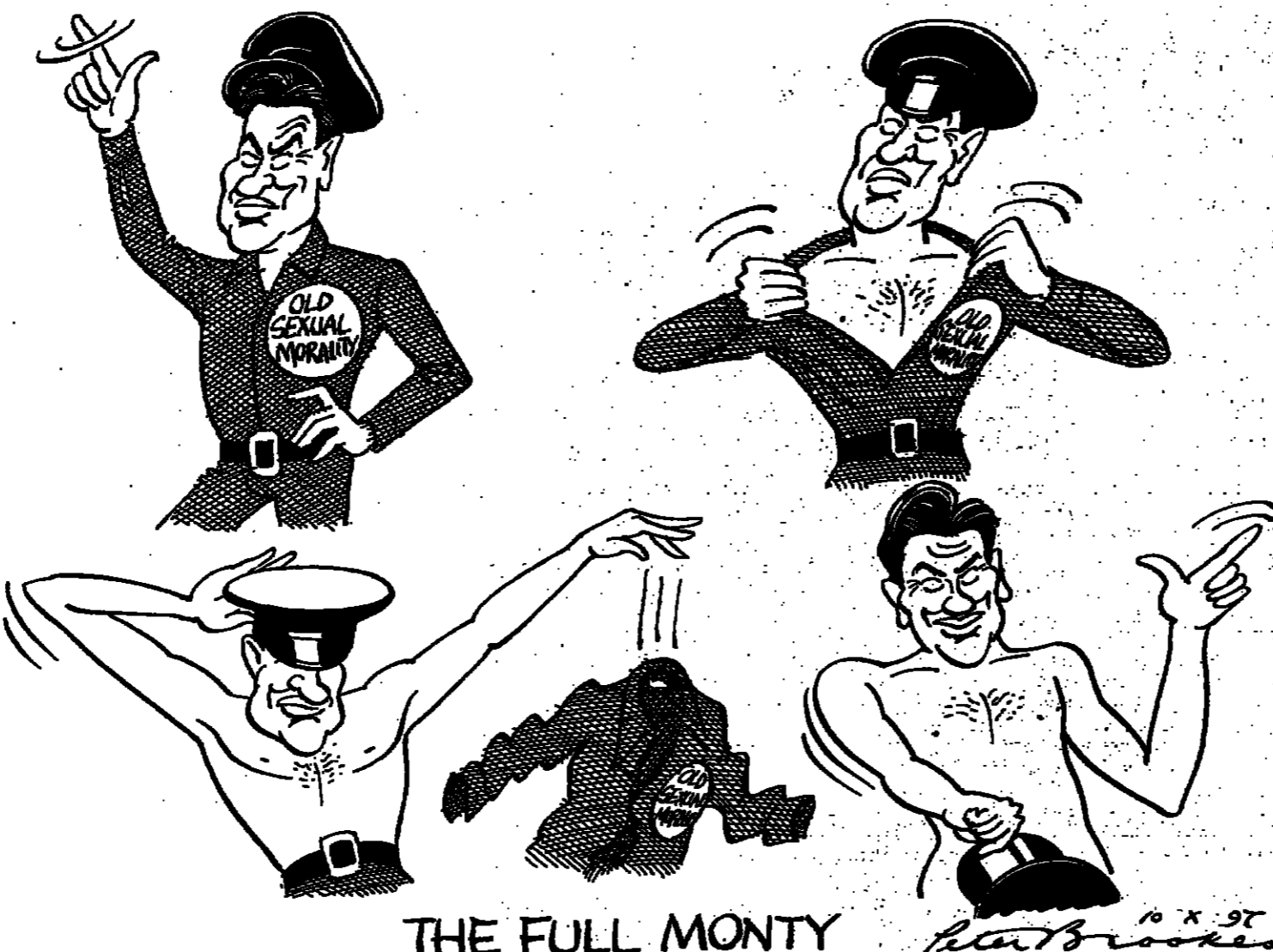
University Grants Committee (UGC) was created in 1919 to support institutions whose investment income had collapsed through wartime inflation. But already in 1932 John Murray, the Principal of Exeter University College, gave warning of the dangers to academic autonomy: "A university is like a man, it may gain the whole world and lose its own soul." And there has been loss of soul. Increasingly, academics make public pronouncements that are self-serving rather than honest. Do you remember when in 1985 Oxford academics voted to deny Margaret Thatcher an honorary degree, claiming that under her higher education was in decline? Actually the system was expanding, and has gone on doing so ever since. That episode and the biased statistics that then threw around represent a stain on Oxford's record. Or do you remember when, in 1980, senior professors united in warning us that the charging of full fees for foreigners would drive them away? Today our university towns are overflowing with foreign students — and why not? Their lovely full fees swell the academic coffers.

But there are more subtle ways in which State funding undermines academic life. As does feel dependent upon the State, they invent justifications for that dependency. Take the economic theory of "positive externalities" in education. This states that because university graduates confer benefits on society by virtue of being graduates, society should pay for their education.

But the private rewards, both cultural and economic, of higher education are so great that no laissez-faire society has ever run out of university graduates. That is a fact you will not easily learn in our faculties of economics today. Perhaps the greatest crisis that universities face today is over standards of teaching. They are declining. That is a direct consequence of nationalisation. Since students do not pay fees directly, they have no power, and lecturers can afford to ignore many of their legitimate complaints.

It is the present Government, not the universities, that has learnt the lessons of the last few general elections. The electorate will not tolerate higher taxes, but it does want better public services. Those imperatives must translate into gradual privatisation. It is a privatisation we can increasingly afford, as living standards continue to rise, as long as care is taken to protect the weak — but only the weak, not the privileged. Fortunately, economic autonomy feeds both academic freedom and higher standards of teaching. "Confronting the contemporary", in Mr Blair's words, is good for everyone, Oxbridge colleges included.

Dr Kealey lectures in clinical biochemistry at Cambridge and is the author of *Economic Laws of Scientific Research*.



Benign hibernation

Tories clamour for Hague to fight back; the nation could do with a period of silence

During a bad storm, skippers in the days of sail would thrust into the passenger's hand the end of a length of rope. "Hold on to this as though your life depended on it," they would holler through the wind. "And keep pulling! Don't let go!"

The rope would be attached to nothing that mattered. The captain's purpose was to make passengers believe they had something vital to do, distracting them from thinking about their own situation, and panicking.

It has seemed to me, in Blackpool this week, that William Hague has a similar challenge. The Conservative Party fears for its life. As the breeze of new Labour's popularity freshens to a storm, concern persists, and could grow, that the Opposition may simply be blown away. To avoid panic, the party badly needs something beyond its own mortality to contemplate, and its new skipper must find ropes for Tory activists and MPs — even his own Shadow Cabinet — to grasp, hold and pull.

Equally important is that these ropes are attached to nothing that matters. This would be the worst possible time for passengers or crew to start pulling the rigging about. Mr Hague must give his party an impression of activity and a sense of purpose, without doing much.

These two imperatives are almost inconsistent. The first is hardly necessary to explain. The worried hopefulness of Tory representatives at the Winter Gardens is palpable. Mr Hague had a measure of success this week in both calming and enthusing his party, but he is not yet secure. Should he miss his stride and fall foul of a press ever ready to headline a "lacklustre" or "disappointing" patch in his leadership, sharks patrol.

Prominent among the fins on partial display is that of Kenneth Clarke. This amazing self-publicist — the only man in British politics yet to have grasped the emerging truth that PR is bad public relations — remains alert to any opportunity to untuck his shirt, throw soup over his own tie, and fall just a millimetre short of ruling himself out of the race.

So Hague needs to keep making waves in his party's indoor swimming pool. Less obvious is the case for not swimming into the deeper waters beyond.

But it is a powerful case. Everyone at Blackpool has been looking for

slogans to caption the relaunch: phrases like "back in business", "the fightback begins now", and Hague's own campaign message, "a fresh start", bleat feebly from the texts of unnumbered press releases. There is one slogan, however, which has hardly been whispered, a slogan which expresses well the response of the wider British public to this party at present. "A period of silence is now called for," has been wise advice for convicted miscreants down the ages. The Tories were banged to rights only five months ago. From the Conservative Party, a period of silence is now called for.

One ventures this not by way of reproach. My own belief is that the party is entitled to boast of its past record and advertise Labour's present demerits. Entitled — but ill-advised, for it will do them no good. Britain is in no mood to hear Tories defending their past, and hardly interested in their future. Britain is in no mood to hear from them at all. They simply irritate people. The feeling is that the Tories have forfeited the right to criticise others. You may feel differently — I do — but it is fruitless to argue with a public mood; and best just to wait for it to go away.

My impression as a journalist is that when the Tory imprimatur is stamped on any critique of the present Government, it discredits the critique. When the press release bears that dreadful beacon on the Central Office logo, fair criticisms of Labour policy are brushed aside. Exposures of Labour corruption or Labour "sleaze" which — had the media uncovered the facts — would have been front-page news, are relegated when a Tory is the messenger. It follows that vigorous opposition from the Opposition is less of an embarrassment to Labour ministers than Conservative spokesmen have been telling their party, to cheers, this week. Should the Prime Minister become embattled within his own party, nothing would rescue him faster than a spirited Tory attack.

For the next year or more, the

British press can make a better Opposition than the Conservative Party, and would probably rather they stayed away: few editors wish to seem in league with Tories. Anyone who has ever been asked to conceal his support for a cause, lest by association he damage it, will know how hurtful it is to be excluded; but somebody should tell the Conservative Party that it is by piping down for a while that they will serve their own beliefs best.

And Hague must know there is another reason for a period of freewheeling. These early days of a new political era are the very worst time for an opposition party to be formulating policy. One of the huge mistakes Labour made in the early 1980s was to attempt a principled opposition to the gathering force of Thatcherism. By the time Neil Kinnock became leader, Labour was saddled (or soon to be) with opposing privatisation on principle, opposing cut-price council house sales on principle, and repeating and entrenching an outdated position on disarmament inherited from another age. They were even stuck with recommending withdrawal from the European Community. Quotes from that time are hurled at them to this day, and still sting.

What is Blairism going to look like? We simply do not know. Nor do we know which elements of emerging Labour policy will prove popular and irreversible, and which will soon be ripening for all-out opposition. Welfare reforms? Constitutional changes? Curfews for kids? "Workfare" policies? Student fees? The restructuring of the NHS? Prospects for the single currency? It is sheer vanity to suppose we can know, now, how Britain will be feeling about such questions in 1999. Let the Tories debate these matters internally until the cows come home, but the last thing Mr Hague should do is hammer out and publish a reasoned critique of Labour's ideas, until he has to.

Which is not yet. Political pundits may grumble or sneer, but the British

Matthew Parris



JULIA ROBERTS, the actress who played a woman of relaxed morality in *Pretty Woman*, is set to portray Diana, Princess of Wales, in the film of Andrew Morton's biography *Diana: Her True Story*. The producers want the Prince of Wales to be played by Hugh Grant or, "falling that", by Kenneth Branagh. But would such a leading man ever work in this cosmos again?

WHY do public figures always give such cringe-making interviews to their old varsity rags? Michael Meacher, Environment Minister, has clearly found distraction from Labour plans to concrete over the remainder of the countryside. He is turning his tortured mind to philosophy and plans to write a book on "the human condition". He tells Oxford's *New Coll-*

ege News: "The only real question is: 'What is the meaning of life?' Why are we here? We live in a single, indivisible Universe and all the dimensions must ultimately fit together."

Most of us gave up wrestling with such problems when we graduated, Mr Meacher.

JASPER GERARD

Philip Howard



Season of mists and conferences — we need a composite

Does the made-over Michael Portillo love unmarried mothers? Do bears do their business in the woods? Once the conference season is over, we spectators can return to our normal ration of oratory per day, groaning like Périgord geese from a surfeit of hot corn. Somebody wrote to *The Times* stating that his daughter wanted to be taught Spanish rather than French at school, because more people worldwide speak Spanish. I suggest German as an alternative.

For we Britons are shockingly ignorant of German. Basil Fawlty and Willie Rushoon are linguistically prejudiced against it. "German is the most extravagantly ugly language. It sounds like someone using a sick-bag on a 747." Piffle. It would be a treat to read Goethe's *Roman Elegies* and to understand Wagner in the original. Kant might make more sense in German. And in any case, the German ability to coin new words by stringing lines of old words together is economical and expresses obliquities unavailable in other languages. *Weltschmerz* equals "world pain", that is, the vague yearning and discontent with life that most of us feel on Monday morning on the Circle Line. *Bildungsroman* is a formation or "upbringing" novel about a young person growing up, such as *David Copperfield*, *Emma* or *Doris Lessing's Children of Violence*.

Those two German words are pretty well naturalised in pre-tentious Li Crit English. But an introduction of the German facility of creating compound words to express complex ideas might make the conference season shorter. Instead of spending an hour last night explaining his conversion on the road from Enfield, Mr Portillo could coin a new word such as *Conversion to Caring* + *Compassionate* + *Multicultural* + *Swinging* + *Conservatism*. And we would at once read his message, plus its subtext of "they don't forget me, no longer Mr Nasty the right-wing bogeyman and, although no longer an MP, still a candidate for the greasy pole".

Such portmanteau words enable German to express profound ambiguities such as those of Mr Portillo more precisely than any other language. It invents them all the time. For example, when a German meets a member of the opposite sex at a dimly lit, drunken and smoke-shrouded conference party, makes a date to meet again, and then discovers in broad daylight that the party of the second part is hideous and an embarrassment to be seen with in public, there is a word for her/his emotions. It is *Nacktplatzzurückschrecken*: naked + plaza + cringing.

And here is the sighting of another just compound word. A mischievous German apparently feels mainly pride when his former girlfriend becomes a lesbian. This cannot be a universal experience, even in Germany. Nevertheless, German has invented a word to describe this uncommon emotion: *Lesbisch-metamorphosetolz* + lesbian + metamorphosis + pride. A folksong with that title (which sounds difficult to get one's tongue round in time) is reported, with steins of beer banged on the table at the end of the chorus. *Kuchennarrworscht*, cake + man + wariness, is the sneaking suspicion that the handsome young man in the café is more interested in the male waiter than he is in his female date.

What a magnificently flexible tongue to wrap itself round such rare neuroses. And how it would prune the verbosity of conference rhetoric. We could coin a composite noun to save the breath of Eurobarometers of all shades along the lines of: *Fore-seable* + *Future* + *Peace-sitting* + *Until* + *Reu* + *Enters Fundament*. Lord Tebbit shall have his guttural composite of Rivers of Balkanisation + Multiculturalism + Sodomitte Marriage. And for Tony Blair we will coin an all-purpose conference word made up of *New* + *Modern* + *Education* + *Giving* + *Power of Positive Thinking*. Once each has uttered his portmanteau, we can switch off and turn to more interesting business.

And then, if we are suffering badly from *Parteilagnüchtheit* (party + conference + weariness), we shall invite the shade of Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, that sardonic German wit, to come and unravel these composite words for us. And he will show us, as we always suspected, that these monstrous towers of conference oratory are erected on foundations of hot air and painted smoke.

Bit of a do

IT was an astonishing spat. Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare and Sir Archibald Hamilton took their row about party reform to a real party. Over champagne they traded increasingly blunt opinions. According to several witnesses, an explosive and another fruitily insult best not repeated here were uttered. Their conference duel was lively enough. Sir Archie had been jeered for his rather complacent opposition to democratising the Conservatives. Archer, the darling of the conference, had told troublesome sorts to "shove off and join another party".

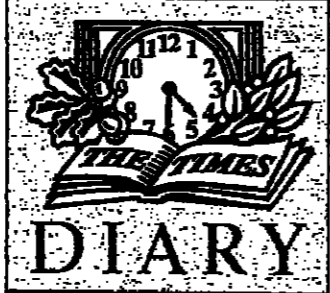
So when the novelist and the chairman of the 1922 Committee met at an ITN party attended by half the former Cabinet at the



Imperial Hotel, a lively discussion was inevitable. "They were like two musting elephants," says one observer, spluttering on a vol-au-vent. "It was a furious exchange. I thought it might come to blows."

Having slept on the affair, the two Tories were diplomatic. Hamilton maintains that "we had words", adding "we did discuss his contribution to the earlier debate". Archer is equally circumspect: "It was an intelligent discussion between two people who care passionately about Parliament."

GUESS who helped to draft Michael Howard's thumping conference speech? Ann Widdecombe. You don't believe me? Well, on the train to Blackpool Rachel Whitestone, Howard's special adviser, rushed up to Miss Widdecombe and said: "You are a septic, what do you think of this?" To Miss W's amazement, she was then shown Howard's anti-European speech. She made a couple of suggestions



— which Howard used, perhaps unknowingly, to great effect.

Seating plan

PITY, if you can, Lord Parkinson. Both Baroness Thatcher and Sir Edward Heath wanted to sit on the platform yesterday. But where could Cecil place them? If one sat nearer the leader, it might look like favouritism. And he could hardly have them next to each other (neither is strong on small talk).

Understandably, Parkinson was not minded to ask Lady T to give way. So instead he spoke to Sir Edward. It was suggested that were he to appear at the same time as his old rival, there was a danger that Thatcher might receive a, well, warmer reception. And this would hardly be very edifying.

Eventually a deal was made.

Call order

FURTHER to my note about Gordon Brown nipping over to Rome to take in the football match there: police will not allow anything into the ground that could be used as a weapon. Problem: our Chancellor likes to remain in constant contact (with his spin-doctors), so he is keen to keep his mobile phone. In the parlance of the diplomat, sound-ings are being taken...

MEL GIBSON'S search for a home continues. Iain Sproat is not selling his delightful country house. Says a local: "We are delighted Iain is staying. This Australian would be too frightful."



TOLERANCE AND TORIES

Burke and Disraeli guide Hague and Portillo

The Tory party is undergoing a transformation as much generational as ideological. The evolution of a more sceptical position on Europe and the adoption of a more inclusive tone on social policy could be construed as simultaneous feints to right and left. The policy changes are, however, better seen as the coming into their inheritance of Thatcher's children. William Hague has planted his standard on libertarian ground since coming to office and Michael Portillo's speech to the Centre for Policy Studies last night was also clearly in that territory.

Margaret Thatcher's premiership was the decisive political influence on the Conservative of Mr Hague and Mr Portillo's generation who are now shaping the party's strategy. From her example they derive their faith in free markets and nations, but their attitudes towards individual freedom in the social sphere have as much to do with growing up after the sexual revolution of the Sixties as with playing a part in the Thatcherite revolution of the Eighties. The refinement of the Conservative position may unsettle reactionaries but it should not be seen as inconsistent with Tory tradition.

Mr Portillo's ejection from Parliament in May has given him more time to read and reflect than many of his colleagues who survived and have had to shoulder the burden of daily Opposition. That period of reflection has prompted humility in one thought haughty. Mr Portillo is honest enough to concede that he has made many mistakes in his own career. He is unsparring in his criticism of the parliamentary party and his analysis of the consequences of division has a touch of *mea culpa* as well as of victim's testimony. It is a gracious touch. Much as Sir Keith Joseph's admission of past Tory errors in the Seventies helped to blaze a trail for Mrs Thatcher, so Mr Portillo's words should make it easier for Mr Hague to make the changes he needs to his party.

Mr Portillo's address on the ghost of

Toryism past and the spirit of Conservatism future owes much to two particular Tory heroes — Edmund Burke and Benjamin Disraeli. Mr Portillo has written about both men over this summer and seems to have absorbed appropriate lessons for his party from their careers. Disraeli, having first steadied his party after the upheaval of the Corn Laws repeal by providing cavalier leadership, then deftly harnessed changing social circumstances to leave progressives looking griggish and out-of-touch. Mr Portillo's proposals on employment law, regulation, the family and the devolution of decision-making all show a keen eye for how mutable Middle England now is. For Disraeli, the newly enfranchised working classes were "angels in marble". For the Tories today, an increasingly liberated and aspirational generation could be carved into a new Conservative constituency.

Edmund Burke's example is, if anything, more apposite. The household god of British Conservatism was, of course, Irish and never a Tory but his influence on Tory philosophy has been more durable than any other politician. Burke was an economic liberal close to Adam Smith in his thinking and a constitutional conservative who looked with horror at the development on the Continent of political experiments which owed more to abstract idealism than inherited wisdom. He was also, however, an advocate of toleration and compassion ahead of his time. In arguing that the Conservative party is now "as capable as any other of comprehending the diversity of human nature", Mr Portillo is placing himself and his Party in the Burkean tradition. The former Defence Secretary is not a prisoner of political correctness; he recognises that children are best brought up "in stable family arrangements with two parents". But the balance of his address marks a decisive, and welcome, move towards a more tolerant Tory party.

OFF THE MARK

In EMU every country will have the wrong interest rates

The Bundesbank's decision yesterday to raise German interest rates for the first time in five years sparked a concerted move to higher rates across much of the continent of Europe. In the process it gave a foretaste of how European economics could work two or three years from now. The glimpse of the future will be a chilling one for countries which have chosen to join the single currency. But for Britain, as long as it remains aloof, it provides nothing but cheer.

Proponents of European monetary union rely on one argument which, they believe, trumps all others. Britain, they say, would suffer from being outside such a powerful currency bloc. When asked to elaborate, they find it hard to agree on what precisely would be the symptoms of such exclusion. Some say the pound would soar, others that it would collapse. Some say that Britain would be sucked into the euro's orbit, like a moon circling a planet. Others worry that, on the contrary, it would fail to benefit from the euro's "stability".

What yesterday's moves towards interest rate convergence have shown, however, is that Britain would undoubtedly be stronger and more independent outside a single currency zone. For in order to bring European interest rates closer together in time for economic and monetary union all of the countries of Europe will have to accept rates that are inappropriate for their domestic economic needs.

Germany's unemployment is at a record high of 11.7 per cent and inflation is only 1.8 per cent. If EMU were not around the corner, a rise in German rates would therefore be quite unnecessary. France, which is suffering from 12.5 per cent

unemployment and has inflation of just 1.5 per cent needs, if anything, lower rather than higher interest rates. Yesterday's increase will exacerbate its problems. Spain and Ireland, on the other hand, have been forced to reduce their interest rates and will go much further in the coming months, despite signs of economic overheating.

In Britain the monetary policy committee of the Bank of England met yesterday too. Had sterling been committed to joining the single currency, the MPC would have faced irresistible pressure to do something in response to the Bundesbank's move. Instead, the committee left rates unchanged. Britain retains a freedom to set appropriate monetary policy that is now denied to other European member states. The benefits have been visible in Britain's superior economic performance ever since the pound left the exchange-rate mechanism in 1992.

Since the euro's interest rates must be set to reflect the average economic conditions in Europe, economies that are less healthy than average (such as France at the moment) will be in the same position as Britain in the dying days of the ERM. High interest rates could strangle at birth the feeble recovery in France and perhaps even in Germany. But the prospect for healthier economies is not much better. The central interest rate will often be set too low for a country growing faster than its neighbours. Such a dynamic country will then be forced to tolerate high inflation or to tighten fiscal policy. This could easily happen to Britain if Tony Blair decided to join EMU. Mr Blair would find himself either having to raise taxes and cut public spending or fuelling high inflation. Is that really what the Prime Minister wants?

A NATION ON THE LINE

Israel now needs Likud and Labour to work together

David Levy's threat to resign yesterday was not especially novel. The Israeli Foreign Minister has spent most of his political career either aspiring to high office or contemplating leaving it. In the current circumstances it might be in Benjamin Netanyahu's best interests if Mr Levy and his Geshet Party did withdraw from his Government. That could prove the catalyst for the Prime Minister to form a national coalition administration. Israel's next Foreign Minister should be Ehud Barak, a former general and the Labour Party leader.

Mr Levy's protest was prompted by Mr Netanyahu's decision to send a hit-squad into Jordan to assassinate Khaled Meshal, a key figure in the Hamas movement. This has proved to be an undiluted disaster. The Mossad agents concerned were captured by the Jordanian authorities. King Hussein, Israel's most important Arab neighbour, was understandably outraged. As a result the Prime Minister was forced swiftly to "release the Hamas founder, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and 70 other Jordanians and Palestinians from an Israeli prison. Such action does not fit well with Mr Netanyahu's stated objective of a war on terrorism.

The Meshal affair has come but a few weeks after Israel lost 12 elite soldiers during a poorly planned raid in southern Lebanon. The country's once awesome reputation on military issues has thus been badly tarnished. No such shift could be more dangerous for the Israeli state. Hamas and

Hezbollah will draw enormous encouragement from Mr Netanyahu's misfortunes. The fact that both operations were personally approved by the Prime Minister, apparently against the advice of his most senior intelligence advisers, has inevitably brought his personal competence into question. He needs to restore his standing.

Israel now faces some fundamental dilemmas. It must decide on what terms, if any, it can permit the Palestinian Authority to become an entity closer to a real country. This will involve choices that have crucial implications for its security. Israel cannot afford to make mistakes on these matters. Its leadership must seek the maximum consensus. A divided and incoherent multi-party majority — held hostage by factions of little size and less flexibility — is not the basis on which to enter serious negotiations.

It is Israel's unique character to be as much a cause as a country. That should permit Mr Netanyahu and Mr Barak to serve together despite their differences. Next year will mark the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Israel as a modern nation. It may also be the moment in which its destiny for the next 50 years is determined. Mr Netanyahu has an elected mandate to pursue peace with security. He may find it impossible to use it properly without a Likud-Labour coalition. All those with Israel's future at heart should encourage the Prime Minister and the Labour leader to reach an accommodation and an alliance.

Call for a modern law of homicide

From Sir Louis Blom-Cooper, QC, and Professor Terence Morris

Sir, If the Prime Minister should sign up to Protocol 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights in Strasbourg this weekend, it will finally abolish the punishment of death in this country.

But, in a sense, that is an issue upon which Parliament made a decision 30 years ago and the final exclusion of treason, piracy and some offences against military law merely removes outdated anomalies. Much more important is the question of what to do with the law of homicide. In July, in an outstanding judgment of Lord Mustill, the House of Lords pronounced in a case on the margins between murder and manslaughter.

One could expect a developed system to embody a law of murder clear enough to yield an unequivocal result on a given set of facts, a result which conforms with apparent justice and has a sound intellectual base. This is not so in England, where the law of homicide is permeated by anomaly, fiction, misnomer and obsolete reasoning.

Attempts to abolish the mandatory life sentence for murder and to provide for greater flexibility in sentencing have so far met with no success. The time has now surely come for a reforming Government to put forward proposals for a modern law of homicide that both meets the requirements of justice and accords with the social and moral realities of our time.

Yours truly,
LOUIS BLOM-COOPER,
TERENCE MORRIS
(Professor Emeritus of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of London, 23 Eastgate Street, Winchester, Hampshire, October 4.)

Tories at bay

From Mr Ian Lucas

Sir, Unlike Simon Jenkins ("Don't panic, Mr Hague", October 9), I was a Labour candidate and was hearing from voters direct why they were going to vote Labour on May 1. I regard it as a gross distortion to suggest that "boredom" with the Conservative Government was the main reason why former Tory voters made the switch to Labour.

Those people told me repeatedly that they were disgusted with the "sleaze" which they saw in the Tory party and John Major's inability to act against it. They also constantly referred to the promises made by the Tories in 1992 which were so swiftly broken.

Voters were ready to vote Labour in 1997 in a way which they would not in 1992. This was largely due to the impact made by Tony Blair and the internal reforms within the Labour Party.

That is why, here in North Shropshire, Labour achieved its best-ever result this year, edging the Liberal Democrats by 8,000 votes and coming within just over 2,000 votes of winning the seat.

Yours faithfully,
IAN LUCAS
(Labour parliamentary candidate, Shropshire North, 1997, Aylestone, Weston Lane, Oswestry, Shropshire, October 8.)

From Mr Robin Wendt

Sir, In asserting that "British Conservatism won the great argument of postwar Britain" by redefining the public and private sectors of the political economy, Simon Jenkins raises an important issue but answers the question too glibly.

Certainly the balance of public and private ownership in industry may be settled for the foreseeable future. However, in the key political area of the public utilities vital questions are unresolved, including the proper distribution of reward between consumers and shareholders and how effective public accountability is to be secured. There is a big uncompleted agenda here.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN WENDT,
28 Church Lane,
Upton-by-Chester, Chester, Cheshire, October 9.

From Mr Neil Page

Sir, Mr Hague has told the Conservative Party to "stop apologising". Have I missed something?

Yours faithfully,
NEIL PAGE,
The Music Department,
Uppingham School,
Rutland LE15 9QE,
October 9.

Stuck in the post

From Mr David Soward

Sir, I am intrigued to read that the Royal Mail have "perfected the self-adhesive stamp" following "nearly four years' research" and "an extensive trial in Scotland" (report, October 9).

Why did they not simply ask the French post office, who have been using self-adhesive stamps for years?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID SOWARD,
Dunrocks,
Ellen Drive, Alderton,
Nr Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, October 8.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Court closures that threaten justice

From Mr A. J. M. Baldwin

Sir, According to a recent article in *The Lawyer* (August 5, 1997) more than 160 out of nearly 550 magistrates' courts have been closed in the past ten years, partly in order to finance the additional tier of administration introduced by the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act.

These closures have not, for the most part, occurred in areas where the Lord Chancellor has approved combined appointments as justices' clerk/chief executive and where benches have also been able to retain their justices' clerk.

The true cost and inconvenience to the public of these closures seems not to have been assessed. Those responsible for taking a broader view might usefully explore this: they might also

consider the words of Lord Justice Lloyd in 1988, in *R v Reading Crown Court ex parte Hutchinson*:

"Magistrates' courts are local courts and there is one in every town of any size in England... I believe this egalitarian aspect of seeking recourse to the law in a magistrates' court to be an important sign of the availability of justice for all."

Is it possible now to state there is a magistrates' court in every town of any size in England? If not, is this viewed with concern by policy-makers?

Yours faithfully,
ALAN BALDWIN (Justices' Clerk and Chief Executive for Hounslow),
Justices' Clerk's Office,
Hanworth Road,
Feltham, Middlesex,
October 6.

Magistrates under fire

From the Chairman of the Magistrates' Association

Sir, Mr Charles Evans claims (letter, September 24) that replacing lay magistrates with stipendiaries would significantly reduce the legal aid bill because there would be fewer appeals to the higher courts. He omitted to mention the excellent record of lay magistrates in respect of appeals against their decisions — only 1 per cent of cases are appealed, and less than half are successful.

The strength of the lay magistracy is that justice is administered by a tribunal of three people, not by a single person being in effect judge and jury. All lay justices are unpaid volunteers, trained and from their local communities; they carry out their judicial duties effectively, efficiently and fairly, with their work complemented by stipendiaries in certain areas.

Research recently commissioned for the Lord Chancellor's Department concluded that stipendiaries did work slightly faster than lay justices, but only by a factor of 5:4, and that they were therefore unlikely to produce the savings suggested by Mr Evans. Indeed, in a speech in July this year, the Lord Chancellor himself said that in cost terms the lay magistracy offers excellent value for money.

The Magistrates' Association is working with government departments to find ways of reducing unnecessary delay, but it must be remembered that justice must not be sacrificed for the sake of speed or cost.

Yours faithfully,
ANNE R. FULLER,
Chairman,
The Magistrates' Association,
28 Fitzroy Square, W1.

From the Chief Crown Prosecutor, Anglia Area

Sir, The disparaging reference by Mr Nicholas Wood to "summary justice" (letter, October 3) will have given great offence to the thousands of lay and stipendiary justices (and, indeed,

Morton and Red Cross

From Mr Christopher Atkins

Sir, I believe that the Red Cross are correct in being careful from whom they accept donations — in this case from Mr Andrew Morton, author of *Diana, Her True Story* — in *Her Own Words* (letter from Mr Ronald Thwaites, QC, October 7; see also letter, October 8).

I wonder if Mr Morton is seeking to buy our good opinion. If he felt genuinely that the donation was appropriate then he could have made it without a fanfare of publicity. He might follow the scriptures and let not the left hand know what the right is doing.

Mr Thwaites's argument is along the lines that since the cause is good then any means of raising money is justified. Shall we then allow criminals to buy our good opinion?

Charities rely on the public's generosity and their ethics should thus be beyond reproach.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER ATKINS,
210 Chislehurst Road,
Peters Wood, Kent,
October 8.

London fashion

From Miss Louise Catherine Radice

Sir, The fashion industry might have reason to be regarded as more than "meaningless fun" (Miss Karen Vincett's letter, October 3) if it took its responsibilities to the wider environment more seriously.

The ecological problems associated with the manufacture of clothing and textiles are many and varied: soil erosion caused by cotton cultivation; acid rain and carbon dioxide produced during the manufacture of petrochemical-derived fibres; the replacement of biodiverse forest ecosystems with single-species timber plantations for the purpose of viscose and rayon production; water pollution resulting from the bleaching and dyeing processes, and so on — to say nothing of the poor wages and conditions suffered by sweatshop workers in developing countries.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

to the many other professionals) who endeavour to administer justice every day in magistrates' courts. I believe that such remarks can only distort any sensible discussion about the trial of criminal offences.

I am not aware of any evidence that justice is more likely to be achieved in the Crown Court than in the lower courts, or that juries provide more of a "public check" on the "excesses of the judiciary and the police" to which Mr Wood alludes than do magistrates and their clerks.

My experience is that most judges and magistrates can be quite robust when the occasion demands. In any event, we would do well to remember that many of the miscarriages of justice exposed recently have followed trials by jury.

I acknowledge the harmful impact that criminal proceedings can have on defendants and their families and, indeed, on many victims. However, magistrates hear at least 97 per cent of all criminal prosecutions and are thus experienced in handling the many sensitive issues to which they give rise.

It is also worth noting that, as far as "either-way" offences are concerned — ie, those that can be tried either by magistrates or Crown courts — most defendants are quite happy to accept trial by the former, and that most of those who elect to be tried by jury actually plead guilty when they get to the Crown Court, thus failing to submit themselves to the judgment of their peers and obscuring the real reason for their election for trial.

I firmly believe that the contribution of the lower courts to the criminal justice system and to society as a whole is immense and that nothing is to be gained by attacking the integrity of those who work there.

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT CHRONNELL,
Chief Crown Prosecutor,
CPS Anglia Area,
Queens House,
58 Victoria Street,
St Albans, Hertfordshire,
October 7.

Princess's funeral

From Father Gerard Quinn

Sir, As a Roman Catholic priest I was rather surprised to discover that I was in almost total agreement with the comments by the Reverend Neil Ross of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland on the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales (report, October 7).

However, I would like to assure him that the service was not the product of "Romish superstition", because of "the way the clergy addressed not God but the deceased".

If the funeral service had been Roman Catholic, then it would have had far more extensive readings from the scriptures and not just one reading and a selection of secular poetry; it would also have consisted of prayers in various forms addressed to the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit.

In Roman Catholic thinking God alone takes centre stage and cannot be replaced by any human being, not even Elton John.

Yours faithfully,
GERARD QUINN,
St Mary's Catholic Church,
279 High Road, East Finchley, N2.

Miss Vincett is quite right in saying that "the effects of [the fashion industry] reach everyone". Isn't it high time that London's fashion designers made an effort to clean up their act on a global scale?

Yours etc,
LOUISE RADICE,
29 Fife Park,
Strathkirkness High Road,
St Andrews, Fife,
lcr1@st-andrews.ac.uk

From Mrs G. Moffat

Sir, Miss Vincett has hit the nail on the head. The public certainly do need "educating to recognise that [fashion] is a serious industry".

Perhaps then we shall be able to enthuse over the examples highlighted by the media.

Imagine! One day we may encounter the likes of Naomi Campbell in a supermarket, bare breasts and all, and be able to react in an informed manner.

Sincerely,
G. MOFFAT,
37 Greenleaf Road,
Wallasey, Merseyside,
October 3.

Hard to obey the House of Bishops

From the Reverend Henry Whyte

Sir, Some 800 churches up and down the country have been invited and authorised to use the proposed new marriage and funeral services (report, October 3; letters, October 7) on an experimental basis. As part of this scheme I received the papers last week and I have been asked to complete and return the response forms by January 1, 1998.

It is hard to believe the statement in the covering letter that the Liturgical Commission and the House of Bishops are "anxious to hear feedback from these services".

They surely know that most parishes have few, if any, weddings in the last three months of the year. We have just one, for which the order of service has already been discussed and agreed, which means that although experimental use of the marriage service sounds very good, its substance is minimal.

There is more possibility of our using the draft funeral services, but once again the time allowed for this is all too short. The suggestion from the Liturgical Commission that "it may be a good idea to set up a small group of lay people who can monitor the use of the new material" takes little account of the realities of parish life, especially in the run-up to Christmas.

Could not the Liturgical Commission and the House of Bishops at the very least extend the period of experimental use and feedback?

I can already hear the response, that the revision timetable will not permit this. In that case it would have been far better not to have embarked on this poorly thought-out and, no doubt, costly exercise.

Yours faithfully,
HENRY WHYTE
(Vicar),
St Michael and All Angels,
Blackheath Park,
2 Pond Road, SE3,
October 7.

From the Very Reverend Peter Baelz

Sir, To dispel all possible doubt about the meaning of wifely "obedience", why not revert to the old Saram use, whereby the bride promises, in the vernacular, to be "ba... and humum [pleasing and compliant] in bed and at the board"?

Yours faithfully,
PETER BAELEZ
(Dean Emeritus of Durham),
36 Brynteg,
Llandrindod Wells, Powys,
October 7.

From Dr T. Varagunam

Sir, It is only a theoretical, if not futile, exercise to dissect out "obey" from the other two emotions — love and honour. All three form an indivisible cluster in holistic eastern philosophies. One who truly loves and honours the spouse cannot but help obey.

Yours faithfully,
T. VARAGUNAM,
2 Rajapillai Terrace,
Kandy, Sri Lanka,
October 7.

Green and healthy

From Dr Paul Sibby

Sir, David Pritchard tells only part of the story about vegetarian propaganda at Wyndcliffe College (letter, October 7). In their zeal for this cause my forebears, who founded and ran the college for over sixty years, made sure their favoured non-carnivorous adherents had a head start by providing them with far superior food. They may have been fat, but they were certainly fast.

Might I suggest that if Mr Pritchard wants his vegetarian scholars back he should offer them the crude but effective carrot of large helpings of their favoured ration?

Yours sincerely,
PAUL SIBBY,
(Deputy Headmaster),
Nottingham High School,
Waverley Mount, Nottingham.
paulsibby@nmpc.co.uk
October 8.

Into thin air

From Mr Roderick Chamberlain

Sir, Earlier this year my wife gave me a new suitcase. This inoffensive object has now contrived to be lost by the airlines on every single one of its first three trips abroad, achieving a remarkable 100 per cent failure rate in its brief life. I wonder if this is a record.

Yours faithfully,
RODERICK CHAMBERLAIN,
Pykes House,
Highclere, Newbury, Berkshire,
October 6.

Drink and health

From Dr R. G. Rawling

Sir, The problem Mr Gerald Vine-stock (letter, October 3) has of achieving a balanced diet is easily solved — a bottle in each hand should suffice.

Yours faithfully,
R. G. RAWLING,
Maxwell House,
Maxwell Road, Ben Rhydyng,
Ilkley, West Yorkshire,
October 1.

OBITUARIES

JOHN MERRICKS



Merricks, left, and Ian Walker during the 470s class at the Brut British Olympic sailing trials at Weymouth, 1995

John Merricks, yachtsman, died in Punta Ala, Italy, following a car crash on October 8 aged 26. He was born in Leicester on February 16, 1971.

John Merricks, who was killed while attending the Melges 24 European Championships at Punta Ala, was one of the most talented racing yachtsmen of his generation. Although he matured in sailing terms relatively late in his short life, he had already amassed a string of successes at the highest international level, helming both dinghies and keelboats. Among the peaks was a silver medal in the 470 class at the Olympic Games in Savannah, Georgia, last year, and victory in the Mumm 36 class in the Admiral's Cup this summer.

In partnership with Ian Walker, Merricks dominated the highly competitive 470 class throughout the run-up to the Olympics and was the hot favourite for a gold medal. After a difficult series the pair managed to grind out a well-earned silver.

After that he and Walker made their first moves into keelboat racing, opening their account with a second place in both the Melges national championships and the class European championships at Barcelona last year.

Their performance in the Admiral's Cup was breathtaking. Ably assisted by an experienced keelboat crew, which included David Howlett as navigator, they defied their short time in a Mumm and ran away with the honours, beating some very high quality opposition and finishing with a resounding win in the Fastnet Race. The Merricks and Walker crew emerged as the top British boat and the second most successful boat in the entire regatta.

Merricks was an instinctive, seat-of-the-pants racer who knew how to make a boat go fast, especially downwind when his reading of wind and wave patterns was second to none. Under pressure he was unflappable and

demonstrated an uncanny ability to perform consistently even in the most adverse conditions. He was a hard worker and knew his stuff technically, benefiting from his work as a sailmaker with North Sails.

It was the partnership with Walker, however, that brought out the best in both of them. Two quite different personalities — Merricks uncomplicated and irrepressible, Walker intellectual and intense — the combination was a nautical dynamite. They focused intensely on their chosen goals and, on the water, blended their talents most effectively, with Merricks steering and Walker controlling tactics.

The two were great ambassadors for the sport, earning the nickname "The Martians" as a result of their Olympic campaign sponsorship by Mars, and later dubbed the "cheeky chappies" of British sailing by *Yachting World* magazine. This was a reflection of their engagingly light-hearted approach on the dock, with a lot of larking around which sometimes fooled opponents into thinking they were not taking things seriously.

Merricks was happier in this role than Walker, and enjoyed the camaraderie and fun side of the sport. He was also an excellent communicator who had no fear of publicity, and he had the self-confidence to handle media pressure at big regattas. In a sport with a tendency to produce prima donna skippers, Merricks was a genuinely modest and gracious individual from a humble background who was both popular and admired.

John Merricks was born in Leicester and began sailing at the age of 12 with his father in a Mirror dinghy on Rutland Water. He progressed quickly with the encouragement of Rutland Sailing Club which awarded him a 420 dinghy. Rutland Challenge, in which he campaigned with Rob Wilson to achieve victory in successive national youth championships.

By this time he had become a member of the Royal Yachting Association youth squad where he came under the guiding hand of the

national coach, Jim Salomonstall. Merricks, who had trained as an electrician, went on to win the 420 world championships with Ian Walker in 1994. By then, however, he had begun his partnership with Walker, himself an established helmsman who had already won the International 14 world championships.

After a few months warming up, the partnership began a long winning streak. In 1994, they were TYRU world champions and won at Olympic regattas at Miami, Spa and Kiel. In 1995 they were European champions in the class, won the British Olympic trials and were again winners at Miami, Spa and Hyeres. Last year they won Hyeres with a race to spare and were second in the 470 world championships. They would have taken the title, had it not been for a miscalculation in their overall score going into the last race. A silver medal at the Olympics followed and then success in Melges and the Admiral's Cup.

To say that Merricks was a rising star would be wrong. He had already made it at the age of just 26. In the coming months he was due to steer Graham Walker's Corel 45, *Corum Indulgence*, at the class world championships in Fort Lauderdale and he had been offered a place on two legs of the current Whitbread Round the World Race aboard the American yacht *Chesapeake*. He was drawn by the challenge of big boat racing, but despite this had decided to have another go with Walker at a gold medal in 470s at the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

Merricks had a very bright future ahead of him and might well have played a key role in the forthcoming America's Cup should a British challenge materialise. Recently Lawrie Smith, the director of sailing for the Spirit of Britain campaign, named Merricks as typical of the new talent in British sailing he wished to see taking part in the Cup. Merricks lived at Titchfield in Hampshire with his long-standing girlfriend, Camilla Myrnes.

THE VEN EDWARD HENDERSON

The Ven Edward Henderson, Archdeacon of Pontefract, 1968-81, died on September 24 aged 80. He was born on October 15, 1916.

AN old-fashioned Evangelical, Edward ("Ted") Henderson had no easy path to ordination. A Georgie by birth, he first fell under influence of the local Church Army captain in the parish in which he was brought up. As head boy of Heaton Grammar School in Newcastle, he was encouraged to go to the Low Church London College of Divinity — later presided over by Donald Coggan — to read theology. He acquired there both an association of the college (ALCD) and a London University BD.

He never, however, liked London much and he returned with some relief to Tyneside, where he served his only curacy at St Luke's, Newcastle upon Tyne. Between 1942 and 1945 he nailed his church party colours once more to the mast by acting as the organising secretary in the North East for the Church Pastoral Aid Society. This involved a good deal of fundraising and deputation work — all intended to strengthen the Evangelical wing within the Church.

The offer of his first benefice took him south to Leeds in Yorkshire, where in 1945 he became vicar of St Mary's, New Wortley. This was a tough inner-city parish which included the grim Armley prison within its boundaries; it was also witness to the boyhood of Alan Bennett, but there was not to be much future sign that Henderson's ministry had had any impact on him.

In 1951 he moved to All Souls', Halifax, another tough urban charge. His service in three separate dioceses since ordination suggested that he was already becoming a man to watch — and his next

move (this time within the diocese of Wakefield) to the parish church of Dewsbury confirmed that impression. Labour's industrial fortresses were often used at the time as a testing ground for fortyish clerics who seemed to



have the potential to rise higher in the Church.

Henderson arrived in Dewsbury in 1959, when he was still 42, and he was to

spend the most creative nine years of his ministry there, becoming rural dean in 1961 and an honorary canon of Wakefield Cathedral four years later. His work greatly impressed his bishop, Eric Treacy, and in 1968 he was appointed Archdeacon of Pontefract, a post that Treacy himself had held on his upward route to becoming bishop of the diocese.

Henderson always saw himself first and foremost as a pastoral priest, and it was characteristic of him that when appointed to his archdeaconry he should have insisted on carrying on with parish work — if in the slightly less exacting environment of the country benefice of Darrington with Wentbridge.

Eventually the pressure of his diocesan responsibilities forced him to give up his parochial work, and for his last six years in office — now under a new bishop, Colin James — his duties were confined to being Archdeacon of Pontefract. He had served briefly — while vicar of Dewsbury — as a Proctor in Convocation for the diocese of Wakefield in 1963 and 1964.

An active Rotarian, Henderson took a great interest in health administration. He served on a community health council and on a hospital board, as well as being a director of a private hospice. He was also an accomplished pianist, and encouraged church music in the various spheres in which he was involved — in his parochial days regularly taking his choirboys to an annual camp at Bridlington, Culleross or Scarborough. In retirement he assisted in the parish of Great Snailth on Hummeridge, and as recently as last winter he could be found playing the piano there for the village pantomime.

He married his teenage sweetheart, Vera Pattison, in 1942 and is survived by her, and by their two sons and three daughters.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL, Bt

Sir Charles Russell, Bt, solicitor, died on September 26 aged 79. He was born on March 13, 1918.

THE 3rd Baronet, Sir Charles Russell was a well-known London solicitor, and was for more than a decade the senior partner of the firm then known as Charles Russell & Co in Lincoln's Inn. To his family he was known as Charles, but to his colleagues in the law he was Tim — to distinguish him from his cousin, also Charles, later Lord Russell of Killowen, the third successive law lord in the family.

Contrary to popular belief, Charles was not the founder but the grandson of the founder of the firm, another Charles Russell, a well-known society solicitor in the first two decades of this century. This grandfather was himself the son of the great Lord Chief Justice, the original Charles, counsel for Parnell and in many other cases celebrities of the 19th century. A baronetcy was conferred on the first solicitor Russell by a grateful monarch for successfully hushing up a scandal involving Daisy Countess of Warwick and the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII. Charles Ian Russell was the son of Sir Alec Russell and was educated at Beaumont and briefly (but apparently not ingloriously) at University College, Oxford, before joining the family firm as an articled clerk.

At the beginning of the Second World War, Russell was commissioned into the Royal Horse Artillery and served in North Africa, including at El Alamein, where he was mentioned in dispatches. Soon after D-Day he was in Normandy, by then as a captain in the 4th RHA, and was wounded and invalided home. The wound left him

with a limp for the rest of his life.

Russell rejoined Charles Russell & Co in 1946 and was admitted a solicitor in 1947. The year he married Rosemary, daughter of Sir John Prestige of Bishopsbourne, near Canterbury.

In his professional career, Russell specialised in family law, especially matrimonial, but he was also solicitor to such bodies as the Jockey Club and the Dorneywood Trust, of which he remained until very recently a trustee. (The Dorneywood Trust is the endowment fund for a house used as a residence by a senior minister of the Crown, nominated by the Prime Minister as he or she may decide from time to time.)

The style of practice, as a solicitor in the 1950s and 1960s was perhaps less hectic than it was to be in the Thatcher boom years, or even in the 1990s: there were certainly crises and emergencies, but the working hours were on the whole shorter than now. Members of the staff of a firm of solicitors were more likely to have been managing clerks than assistant solicitors, and there was, fortunately, a succession of capable and devoted managers, some of whom served for more than 40 years — and in one remarkable instance for more than 60 years.

As a divorce lawyer, Russell was tactful and discreet, liked by his clients and a good negotiator. He regularly found himself dealing with the same professional opponents, who would treat each other with well-earned respect, and there was a strong rapport among members of the Bar — and thus, later, of the Bench, too.

In his day the firm was known, paradoxically, both for its divorce cases and for its Roman Catholic connections: but Sir Charles helped to lay



the foundation for later growth and diversification of the work. He was glad to have been able to move the firm's premises to Lincoln's Inn in 1968 (where it stayed until 1995).

In his spare time Russell played golf, although not to a particularly high standard. He did, however, become captain of Royal St George's, Sandwich, in 1981-82, and threw himself into the organisation of the first Open Championship to be held there for many years.

He was also a popular member of the Garrick Club, where he served on the house committee and as the club's solicitor, becoming a life member in 1991. The Garrick

was the place he would take aspirant partners of the firm, to be treated generously to gin, and to be warned that a partnership was something of the greatest consequence, "even" more binding than matrimony.

Russell had a keen sense of humour and was well aware of the numerous stories about him, which he secretly enjoyed. There was the occasional explosion, but he was a humble man, a devoted Catholic and a devoted family man. He was greatly upset by the death of his wife, Rosemary, in 1996. He is survived by his daughter, Mrs Richard Shepherd, and by his son Charles, who succeeds to the baronetcy.

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CAMBRAI IN RUINS. ENEMY'S SAVAGE REVENGE.

(From Our Special Correspondent)

War Correspondents' Headquarters, Oct. 9. The success of our attack yesterday was as complete as could be imagined or desired, and to-day we are gathering the fruits. The prisoners altogether will be not less than 10,000. Cambrai has been ours since daylight, and on all the front of the attack the Germans have fallen back across the first stages of what we can only assume to be a retirement to the Le Cateau line. By noon to-day some of our troops, pressing on the enemy's heels, had already reached the village of Berry, some nine miles east of the line from which they attacked yesterday morning.

Berry is four miles from Le Cateau. Just east of Berry, and thence north-westward to Cambrai, runs the railway line along which at some places the Germans seem disposed to make a stand. At other places he has been blowing up the railway and burning stores at various points on the line. At one place south of Berry, towards Buzignies, we are reported to have crossed the railway. Whether, therefore, he makes, or hopes to make, a temporary stand on that line, it certainly cannot hold. There appears to be no likely resting place this

ON THIS DAY

October 10, 1918.

October 10, 1918.

This defeat of the Germans, who had 23 divisions in action, was one of the great pitched battles of the war. It was at Cambrai, in November 1917, that tanks were used for the first time.

side of Le Cateau, and at Le Cateau, it is needless to say, we shall not only have left the battlefield of 1917 behind us, but we shall have reached the fields, with all their glorious memories, of 1914. That the Germans had planned, under our pressure of these last few weeks, to fall back here makes little difference. It is probable that if we had not struck yesterday, they would soon have been slipping away. But we did strike, caught them in the act of their preparations, and drove him back before his preparations were complete. At many villages, fires are burning to-day, and he is doing what destructive work he can; but in the country

which we have this morning overrun, he has had no time to destroy, and hamlets have fallen into our hands intact, and we have released many hundreds, and probably some thousands, of French civilians. Five hundred have been rescued from the village of Sélain, three miles east of Villers-Outreux, alone. Large numbers have been found at Selvigny and Caullery, further north, and it is believed that still larger numbers will have received deliverance by to-night from places further east. As for Cambrai, it is already a place of pilgrimage, and all sorts of minor souvenirs from the town, such as food tickets issued by the International Relief Commission, are passing from hand to hand far behind our lines. It was still dark this morning when, soon after 4 o'clock, Chandiery entered the town from the north, while English troops worked in from the southern side. No civilians were left in the place, as we knew would be the case; but German soldiers were found hiding and making no attempt to fight. We have never shelled Cambrai, except very slightly, and, though thoroughly looted by the Germans, the town is not badly wrecked, and has been knocked about, but is not structurally injured. Other churches stand with no injury beyond the breakage of glass.

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY OCTOBER 10 1997

German rate rise upsets markets

By ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

Increases across Europe but Britain stays unmoved

THE Bundesbank yesterday created chaos in financial markets after its unexpected decision to increase its key rate prompted rate rises across Europe.

Bond and share prices plummeted in the European markets while the mark made substantial gains against the dollar and sterling.

The Bundesbank raised its key rate from 3 per cent to 3.3 per cent — the first increase for five years.

The Bank of France immediately increased its key intervention rate from 3.1 to 3.3 per

cent, while Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria and Denmark also moved quickly to adjust their rates higher.

The rises completely overshadowed the Bank of England's decision to leave UK rates unchanged — made just 30 minutes before the Bundesbank decision.

Both the Bundesbank and the Bank of France admitted in statements that the increases had been partly motivated by EMU. Alfons Verplaetse, governor of the Belgian central bank, con-

firmed there had been agreement in advance on the need for rate increases which was intended to push European rates from "historically low to more normal" levels.

Economists predicted that German interest rates are set to rise as high as 4.5 per cent to ensure interest rate convergence across Europe. But European countries with high interest rates, which include Spain, Portugal and Ireland, made no moves to cut rates yesterday and economists said these countries will find diffi-

culty in meeting the convergence target.

Marian Bell, Treasury economist at the Royal Bank of Scotland, said: "There is little domestic justification for the hikes. By effectively bringing in fixed exchange rates months ahead of a single currency, the EU risks setting up a target for speculators which it might live to regret."

European bond markets were especially hard hit. Life volume leapt to 1.9 million compared with an average of 800,000 and a previous best of

1.6 million in 1994. The December ten-year Bund future fell 0.8 points to 102.49, while the French ten-year notional fell 0.96 to 99.12. UK gilts also suffered with the December long gilt closing down 20/32 at 118 1/32.

Graham McDevitt, of Banque Paribas, said: "No body was expecting a 30 basis-point rise and very few people thought any increase would come this soon."

European stock markets already weakened by worries over US interest rates, follow-

ing Alan Greenspan's bearish comments on Wednesday, also suffered. In Paris the CAC-40 fell 63.43 points to 2,960.65 and the Frankfurt Dax slipped 61.39 points to 4,181.62. But the Milan market was the biggest loser falling nearly 3 per cent in trading.

In London, the stock market endured an especially volatile day's trading, recovering from early falls, after the monetary policy committee decision, only for the European rates rises to send the market lower again. The FTSE 100 closed

down 44.3 at 5,213.3. UK companies with large exposure to the German market were worst hit although banks and insurance companies, large holders of gilts, also fell.

The pound lost ground against the mark, closing down nearly two pence at DM2.8290. The mark also gained over a pence against the dollar to DML7318 but was little moved against the French franc.

The mark's biggest gains came against the lira which fell from 982.62 to 985.13 after the resignation of Romano Prodi, the Italian Prime Minister.

Commentary, page 27

Commerzbank withdrawal a setback for BZW sale

By JON ASHWORTH

COMMERZBANK declared itself out of the running for BZW yesterday, dashing hopes of a swift sale, and increasing pressure on Martin Taylor, the Barclays chief executive.

Fears about the success of the disposal programme grew yesterday, despite Paribas, the French banking group, confirming it is interested in parts of the BZW operation. Barclays put the BZW equities and corporate finance arms up for sale a week ago, after conceding defeat in its efforts to build a global investment bank. The rest will be incorporated into the renamed Barclays Capital Group.

Commerzbank had been tipped as the favoured buyer, despite opposition from BZW staff, who questioned whether the cultures would fit. It emerged yesterday that BZW had held informal sale talks with Travelers Group, the US financial services operation. Travelers' decision to bid instead for Salomon, the Wall Street investment house, is thought to have helped precipitate the decision to sell BZW.

Commerzbank, which is keen to expand equities operations in London, Frankfurt and New York, said it was not a contender. A spokesman said: "Commerzbank isn't interested in BZW or any part of it. It doesn't fit our revenue goals."

John Aitken, banking analyst at UBS, reiterated his "sell" stance on Barclays, and gave warning of "a further 15 per cent downside" in the share price in the medium term. The shares closed 20p lower at £16.27 1/2 p.

Mr Aitken said that Barclays could be forced to restructure operations, resulting in a total charge of £200 to £250 million. There were concerns that the sale proceeds could be relatively small.

Staff at BZW have yet to receive details of bonus payments, aimed at preventing defections in the run-up to a sale. Details of assets, employees and revenue streams at the so-called "BZW NewCo" are expected to be circulated to potential buyers in the next three weeks. Goldman Sachs is advising on the disposal.



Brighter picture: reduced pre-tax losses gave John Coleman, House of Fraser's chief executive, something to smile about

House of Fraser on road to recovery

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

HOUSE OF FRASER, the department store group, provided evidence that it is well on the road to recovery as it cut its first-half pre-tax loss from £13.6 million to £1.8 million.

Brian McGowan, chairman, said that all the milestones set last year have been met. The launch of the group's own-label clothing, Lines, has gone well and should help to boost second-half sales. Like-for-like sales are currently running 5 per cent ahead, compared with 3.8 per cent in the first half.

John Coleman, chief executive, said that no further progress has been made in finding buyers for the Sheffield and Eastbourne stores. If no buyers are found, the stores will be shut.

The company is still unloading poor stock, which is contributing to depressed margins. "We need margin improvement rather than sales growth," said Mr McGowan. "The margin could be a lot better, but we have made a good start."

The company has carried £25.5 million of last year's £52.3 million exceptional charges forward to cover stock overhang and restructuring and disposals of stores. It will pay a maintained interim dividend of 1.7p on December 1.

Commentary, page 27

BUSINESS TODAY

FTSE 100	5,213.3	(-44.3)
Yield	3.12%	
FTSE All share	2,960.65	(-17.84)
Nikkei	17,976.82	(-242.24)
Dow Jones	8,883.07	(-41.59)
S&P Composite	979.41	(-5.49)

Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(9.50)
Long Bond	89 1/2%	(100%)
Yield	6.40%	(8.30%)

3-mth interbank	7 1/4%	(7.4%)
Life long gilt	110 1/2%	(110 1/2%)

5-year gilt	110 1/2%	(110 1/2%)
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10-year gilt	110 1/2%	(110 1/2%)
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30-year gilt	110 1/2%	(110 1/2%)
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New York	1,622 1/2	(-1,622 1/2)
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London	1,627 1/2	(-1,627 1/2)
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DM	2,960.65	(-2,960.65)
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FF	2,960.65	(-2,960.65)
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S&P	979.41	(-979.41)
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Yen	187.07	(-187.07)
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S index	100.2	(-100.2)
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Tokyo close Yen	121.18	
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Brent 16-day (Dec)	\$20.80 (\$20.80)	
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London close	\$336.88 (\$336.88)	
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		* denotes midday trading price
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WH Smith to explain rejection

RICHARD HANDOVER, the new chief executive of WH Smith, will meet several institutional investors next week to offer his justification for the company's abrupt rejection of TSB Bank's £1 billion takeover proposal (Sarah Cunningham writes).

Mr Handover, who is SBC Warburg, the bank backing his move, yesterday began redrafting the terms: "WH Smith shareholders have told him they are unhappy with the idea of his new venture, the Daily and Evening Express store, being brought into the group and with the level of debt the deal would bring."

Mr Handover hopes to meet WH Smith's board once the new proposal is ready, probably early next week.

Asterix plans £36m Paris float

By FRASER NELSON

ASTERIX THE GAUL is coming to his native stock market via a floatation that will raise around £36.6 million for Parc Asterix, the French theme park dedicated to the life and loves of the cartoon warrior.

Parc Asterix, which for the past five years has been fighting the advances of EuroDisney, its American rival, is joining the Second Market in Paris in three weeks. Its expected market valuation is about £250 million (£57.6 million).

The theme park, which has cost £115 million to build and develop, suffered a body blow when EuroDisney opened. The annual number of visitors to Asterix plunged from 1.5 million to 1 million.

Situated about 21 miles outside Paris, it relies on the citizens of the capital for 45 per cent of its custom



Asterix all set to go native

and suffered badly when the American park opened with equal accessibility. Since then, the gate receipts have been growing at an average 14 per cent a year and the park is expected to welcome a record 1.9 million visitors by the end of this year.

It boasts repeat rates of 50 per cent, the highest for any European theme park, and an average spend per visitor of £19.50. Last year this brought sales of £31.8 million and generated profits of £2 million.

The floatation will deliver a share windfall for its 175 staff, who will join a profit-sharing scheme. With the money from the placing, it intends to open two more attractions — the Forest of the Druids and La Haute des Chevaliers, another themed restaurant. Barclays Bank will be one of the main holders, with its stake in the theme park reduced from 16 per cent to 5 per cent.

Unlike EuroDisney, all its attractions are in the open air. The park refuses to open during the winter months. It also differs from its rival in that it spends little on advertising on the grounds that the worldwide success of its Asterix comics delivers enough publicity.

Votes for all City businesses

CORPORATION of London councillors have agreed to award the franchise to all businesses within the Square Mile, giving votes to the big City banks and other institutions for the first time (Martin Waller writes).

The decision was taken at a meeting yesterday of the Court of Common Council, the local government body that includes both aldermen and members of the Corporation.

The aldermen have agreed in future to stand for re-election and to abandon the right to veto the appointment of any new aldermen.

Carlton plans Net link-up

By RAYMOND SNODDY
MEDIA EDITOR

MICHAEL GREEN'S Carlton Communications is in talks with Web TV, the Microsoft subsidiary, about incorporating Internet technology in the launch of digital terrestrial television in the UK next year.

Carlton and the Granada group make up the British Digital Broadcasting partnership, which plans to launch at least 20 channels of digital television in the second half of next year.

BDB has been impressed by the Web TV technology, which allows the Internet to be displayed on ordinary television screens. Two Carlton executives are in California to explore the possibility of using Web TV technology in the digital "black box" planned for the UK. Web TV recently launched a \$300



Green, in talks with Web TV

box in the US which can display the Internet on television screens. It is designed to take the Internet to the majority who do not have PCs.

The new digital terrestrial television channels can be received without either a satellite dish or cable connection, but need a

digital decoder, or black box, expected to retail at £200 to £300, including subsidy.

Unlike rivals for the commercial digital terrestrial frequencies, BDB placed its main initial emphasis on entertainment. In recent months it has been exploring the possibility of including more interactive services, such as home shopping and banking.

BDB has also been talking about interactivity in recent weeks with British Interactive Broadcasting, the consortium planning to use digital satellite broadcasting to launch interactive services. BDB is also planning to display Internet services on television screens.

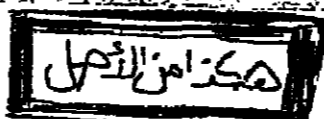
Next year the UK population will be able to choose from three different digital systems all offering many more television channels — digital satellite, digital cable and digital terrestrial.

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Sainsbury pledge to take on 1,000 young jobless

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

J SAINSBURY, the supermarket chain, yesterday joined businesses supporting the Government's efforts to cut youth unemployment with the promise to recruit 1,000 young people.

The move came as Andrew Smith, the Employment Minister, set out details of how the New Deal programme will work, including a

mentoring system to give jobseekers their own role models. Mr Smith said that young people would be able to call on personal mentors, sought out from volunteers by the employment service, to help them through job and placement applications.

Taster periods of work experience will also be available for the unemployed without jeopardising benefits, and help will be provided for childcare.

J Sainsbury's pledge of 1,000 places

for young unemployed people came as the Confederation of British Industry and Co-operative Wholesale Society backed the New Deal. John Adshad, Sainsbury's human resources director, said: "The company sees this as a way to give unemployed people the opportunity of a permanent job with good career prospects." The CBI said it was vital that the young unemployed should be given the skills and experience to bring them back into the jobs market.

British Telecom also said yesterday that it would seek every opportunity to employ New Deal participants.

More than 30 major companies have now endorsed the New Deal, which is part of the Welfare to Work initiative funded by the windfall tax. It was designed to find work for 250,000 young people. But with unemployment falling, the number of young people that are without work now stands at 150,000.

Mr Smith denied that the scheme

was becoming less relevant. He said that 15,000 young people passed the six-month threshold of being out of work each month and the Government needed to ensure that they were not disconnected from work.

The New Deal will start in 12 areas in January and be implemented nationwide by April. The Government will aim to block abuses of the system through a confidential hotline and by quality control checks to monitor work and training places.

Valuations 'altered to inflate QMH profit'

By DOMINIC WALSH

THE thorny issue of hotel valuations was put under the spotlight in the High Court yesterday as four former directors of Queens Moat Houses were accused of manipulating valuations to inflate profits artificially.

The four men, including John Baird, the former chairman, were all sacked in 1993 in the wake of the suspension of QMH shares, and are now suing the company for unfair dismissal.

In the run-up to the start of the trial this week, Mr Baird and his colleagues — Martin Marcus, David Hersey and Allan Porter — had tried to argue that a controversial 1992 million property writedown instigated by current management was largely to blame for the financial mire in which QMH finds itself.

Michael Burton, QC, for QMH, continuing his opening remarks, cited valuations as one of the tools used by the former directors to cover up profit shortfalls. He estimated that up to £60 million of the £90 million pre-tax profit reported in 1991 had been "either non-existent or artificially created or, at the very least, should have separately disclosed" as exceptional items.

He cited the example of London's Sloane Club, which was valued at £17 million when QMH acquired it in

1990 as part of Norfolk Capital Hotels. As a result, Mr Burton said, when the hotel was sold on in 1991, the company should have booked a loss on the transaction of £3 million. "In fact, it appears that the £17 million was revalued to £15 million, then, just before the interim report at the end of June 1991, it was devalued again to £9.5 million."

But, according to Mr Burton, that was not the end of the matter, as the directors then decided to use yet another valuation, this time the £3.8 million that the Sloane Club had originally cost Norfolk Capital in 1988. "When it came to the end of the year they needed some more profit to be found, and squeezing as much as they could out of a pint pot, they had a rethink on the Sloane Club transaction, and at the year-end, what should have been a loss of £3 million had become a profit of £10.2 million."

Mr Burton, who this week has outlined how sale and leaseback deals and incentive management schemes were also used to inflate profits, alleged that Mr Baird and the other three men had failed in their duty to disclose such one-off profits in the report and accounts, choosing instead to disguise them as trading profits. The case continues.



Bob Critchlow, chief executive of Tetra Holdings, enhancing profile with customers

Tetra proposes flotation on main market

TETRA HOLDINGS, the management software group, said yesterday that it planned to float on the main market via a placing with institutional investors (Chris Ayres writes). Tetra, whose customers include the BBC, Dalgely, Glaxo Wellcome and Motorola, has sales of £22 million, and made an operating profit of £2.8 million last year. HSBC Investment Bank is acting as sponsor and stockbroker to the proposed listing. Bob Critchlow, chief executive, said: "A listing will enhance our profile with customers and within the industry generally."

Japanese deal for Vanguard Medica

By PAUL DURMAN

VANGUARD MEDICA, the drug development company, has secured a deal to license a kidney disease treatment to Sanryo, Japan's largest pharmaceutical company.

Sanryo will have exclusive rights to sell VML 252 in Japan, the largest potential market after the US, and also in China, Korea, Taiwan and Thailand. Vanguard did not reveal the terms of the deal. The shares rose 22½p to 447½p.

Vanguard is likely to have received an upfront payment in the low single-figure millions. More importantly, it is believed to have agreed a royalty on future sales of about 15 per cent. The Japanese market could be worth up to £100 million a year.

Because of the lengthy Japanese regulatory process, VML 252 is unlikely to go on sale in Japan before 2003. Vanguard hopes for earlier sales elsewhere.

CBI finds slower high street sales

By ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

HIGH STREET sales growth moderated in September, providing new evidence that windfall spending could be on the wane.

The monthly Confederation of British Industry distributive trades survey showed that 47 per cent of retailers questioned reported an increase in sales volumes, while 21 per cent said that they fell. This left a positive balance of 26 per cent reporting growth — well below last September's level of 46 per cent.

The sales growth rate was also considerably below what retailers had been expecting, while the quarterly growth rate slipped to its lowest level since January 1996.

The CBI said that some of the slowdown in September could be attributed to the closure of shops for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales. Retailers' growth expectations remain high, suggesting that sales could pick up again in the run-up to Christmas.

Alastair Eperon, chairman of the CBI's survey panel, said: "Growth remains quite strong and expectations for October indicate a quickening in the pace of expansion."

Spending in sectors linked to the household, which had previously enjoyed windfall-fuelled growth, slowed sharply. Furniture and carpets recorded only a marginal increase while the growth rate halved in hardware, china and DIY. But the household goods sector enjoyed further strong growth.

Simon Briscoe, director of research at Nikko Europe, said that the survey provided tentative evidence of a slowdown and would ease some of the pressure for a rate rise.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Competition in water industry flounders

THE FIRST attempt to sell water competitively has hit a hitch after only a few hours of supply. Anglian Water's pioneering move to supply Buxted Chickens in Suffolk via a new 3.5 km pipeline was halted last week shortly after the supply to the factory had been turned on. The factory was switched back to Essex & Suffolk, its original regional water company, while Anglian engineers work to reconnect the first competitive commercial customer.

A spokesman for Anglian said that the extent of the problem was being assessed. Early investigations indicate pressure difficulties, which Anglian said was common in new mains pipes. The first move for competition in water was endorsed by Ofwat in June. While there has been some enthusiasm for competition throughout the water network, it is difficult to achieve because of technological and geographical factors. Anglian also has plans to treat sewage at an old RAF site near Doncaster, South Yorkshire.

PIA fine for adviser

THE Personal Investment Authority has fined R H Asper Management, a financial adviser in Orpington, Kent, £10,000 and £1,000 costs after it failed to comply promptly with an award made against it by the PIA Ombudsman. In April the Ombudsman ordered the firm to pay £37,700 in compensation to an investor. Payment was not made until July. Meanwhile, the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation has reprimanded Johnson Fry Asset Managers for failing to register two individuals involved in securities transactions, even after the omission was noticed in August 1996. Imro ordered Johnson Fry to pay £1,250 costs.

Bonds workers strike

THOUSANDS of Premium Bonds workers are to stage a one-hour strike tomorrow in protest at plans to privatise the National Savings Agency. Members of the Public Services Tax and Commerce Union at the agency, which deals with Premium Bonds, savings certificates, children's and pension bonds have voted to take industrial action because they oppose staff being transferred out of the civil service. Up to 4,000 workers at the National Savings centres in Blackpool, Glasgow and Durham will walk out for an hour from 11am in action aimed at highlighting the campaign rather than disrupting the service.

Scotch crackdown

THE Scottish whisky industry welcomed news that the Taiwan Government is to crack down on the import of counterfeit whisky. Brian Wilson, Industry Minister at the Scottish Office, said after a meeting in Taipei that he had been assured that legislation is to be passed "within a few months", aimed at eliminating counterfeit Scotch whisky, which is believed to account for about two thirds of all whisky sold in Taiwan. Mr Wilson also claimed that the Taiwanese had agreed a legal definition of whisky and he was satisfied that the legislation would go ahead.

BTP to sell Mydrin

BTP, the speciality chemicals group, has confirmed that it is to sell Mydrin, its industrial adhesives and textiles coatings business. Mydrin made an operating profit of £5.3 million on sales of £108 million in the year to March 31, but the company offers lower margins than the speciality and fine chemicals businesses on which BTP is now focusing. It was suggested yesterday that Mydrin, one of the European leaders in its markets, might be sold for up to £100 million. SBC Warburg Dillon Read is handling the sale.

Allied London deal

ALLIED LONDON PROPERTIES has completed, with Roxylight, the purchase of Artillery Mansions, a redundant apartment complex in Victoria Street, central London. Allied London said the 1½-acre site has been granted planning permission for redevelopment as 187 apartments. The refurbished front block will provide 46 luxury flats, while consent has been given for new buildings at the rear containing 141 flats. The development is to be financed by a non-recourse phased loan arranged by Barclays specialist property finance team and Pall Mall corporate banking centre.

Third North Sea find for Amoco

By OUR CITY STAFF

A NEW and "significant" North Sea oil discovery 160 miles off the east coast of Scotland has been made by Amoco Exploration Company and Amerada Hess, which claim it could provide a new hub for oil and gas fields.

Clive Fowler, managing director of Amoco (UK), said the oil was very light and of exceptionally high quality. He added that the flow rates from the well were very encouraging, with 6,329 barrels of oil and 13.4 million cubic feet of gas being produced per day.

The new find is close to several possible new developments and a special central area project team has been

formed under the leadership of Richard Bozanic, formerly Amoco's southern area exploration manager.

The find is close to several possible new developments, including the Amoco-operated Halley field. It is the third discovery to be made by the company and its co-venturers in the North Sea within the past year.

"Our objective now will be to prepare a detailed development plan as quickly as possible for government approval," said Mr Fowler. "These discoveries confirm our belief that there are valuable North Sea oil and gas reserves still to be tapped."

TOURIST RATES

Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank
Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.32	2.14	0.684
Austria S	20.82	18.27	3.581
Belgium F	61.82	65.98	2.44
Canada C	2.253	2.175	1.119
Cyprus Cyp	0.898	0.815	301.00
Denmark Kr	11.27	10.48	6.31
Finland Mk	5.06	4.51	250.75
France F	5.28	4.90	13.08
Germany Dm	3.00	2.75	2.51
Greece Dr	474	435	2260.00
Hong Kong \$	13.42	12.22	1.734
India Rs	108	108	1.391
Ireland P	1.17	1.08	
Israel Sh	5.98	5.33	
Italy Lira	208	2751	
Japan Yen	212.08	194.50	

Notes for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Client rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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CHANGING TIMES

Now the party is over



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Fun-loving stock market bulls have had a pretty awful two days. On Wednesday Alan Greenspan, redoubtable chairman of the US Federal Reserve, arrived on the scene, warning against rampant share prices even further, like a policeman interrupting a rave and asking the kids to turn the music down. Yesterday, the Bundesbank came along, shut the party down and arrested everybody.

The clear message from Washington and Bonn is that interest rates are going up and that is not good news for the richly valued stock markets of New York and London. Mr Greenspan made it clear that new economic paradigms notwithstanding, unemployment in America could not go on falling for ever without igniting inflation. He said so much last December, when he warned Wall Street of irrational exuberance, prompting sharp falls in share prices. This time his warning to asset markets was, if anything, more explicit but Wall Street dropped by a mere 1 per cent. It was clear, even before the stunning events in Europe, that Mr Greenspan was going to have to follow his verbal warning shot with a concrete move to tighten money.

That prospect is even more likely, and is sure to come more quickly, because of the Bundesbank-led round of European rate rises yesterday. Although the initial reaction in the

currency markets was relatively undramatic, it seems likely that the mark will profit — and the dollar suffer — over the next few months from the Bundesbank's aggressive bid to take back control of events in Europe. For months, markets and unemployment-ridden European governments have been comfortable in the thought that the euro was destined to be a soft currency that would foster growth and jobs. The Bundesbank has changed that perception. Whatever the politicians want, it will not brook anything but a hard euro, backed by relatively high interest rates, to ensure something close to price stability.

Britain is left in an interesting position. In order to join the single currency in the first wave, its interest rates would have to "converge" sharply downwards. If the Government had ever been serious in this aim, yesterday, to an extent, could be a source of rejoicing. Convergence would happen more by German rates rising than British rates falling. This would mitigate fears of an inflationary boom on its eventual entry to the euro.

But the fact is that it is inconceivable, economically and politically, for Britain to join in

the first wave. Gordon Brown can therefore enjoy a decline in the pound against the mark from the sidelines and the Bank of England will raise base rates next month. Just remember that the last time the Bundesbank raised rates led to sterling's exit from the exchange-rate mechanism and freedom to scramble to economic recovery. Let us hope the latest Bundesbank move serves to reemphasise the joys of an independent monetary policy.

Landmark decision for out-of-towners

As Environment Secretary, John Gummer was as rabidly opposed to out-of-town development as he was (vicariously) enthusiastic about hamburgers. All the indications have been that his successors might share his views, at least as far as development was concerned — when it comes to

dining, new Labour is rather more fond of polenta and Pont de la Tour than Big Macs and Burger King.

But yesterday brought a cheering prospect for developers who want to venture beyond the confines of existing town centres. The High Court ruled that Mr Gummer might have been a touch heavy-handed in vetoing plans for an out-of-town cinema complex in Hampshire. Now his successor, the deputy prime minister himself, will have to take a look at the proposals and come to his own conclusion.

Mr Prescott may care to take into account the fact that 300,000 people in the area have registered their wish that the project should proceed, as has the local council. Does fun-loving Mr Prescott want to prevent all those voters enjoying an evening's entertainment with the benefit of easy parking? The company battling for permission to build the cinema is

Virgin, but we must resist the temptation to dismiss this as a mere publicity stunt: Richard Branson did not turn up in court disguised as a martyr. The judge was sufficiently convinced by Virgin's case to award the company its costs.

The battle could have significance reaching far beyond the cinema screen. Retailers, particularly supermarket operators, find it increasingly difficult to win planning permission for the scale of development that they know customers want. Often, as in the Virgin case, the local authority will back them only to find the Department of the Environment says no.

Elliott Berners's Chelsfield has turned its Merry Hill shopping centre into the new Dudley, to the extent that the local councillors enthusiastically gave their blessing to plans to extend the development substantially. After the inevitable protracted inquiry, the Government refused

permission, a decision with few obvious beneficiaries. Mr Prescott's eventual decision on the Virgin case could set the tone for a more sensible approach to planning. If Virgin excels in any direction, it is in understanding the customer, and customers want to see out-of-town development. For customers, politicians could read voters.

Spring cleaning Fraser-style

When the spring clean extends to throwing in the kitchen sink, it can produce a remarkable shine. House of Fraser's decision in April to provide £53.2 million to cover for past mistakes was a nasty shock at the time, but months on, the pain is nearly forgotten and the company basks in a new sheen.

Yesterday the talk was of rising sales and margins. It seems almost churlish to point out that there was a first-half loss of £1.8 million, although £14.6 million of those provisions were used, a chunk of that relating to stock disasters that had to be cleared. "Off-strategy stock," was the official description for the fashion disasters that had to be almost given away.

But Fraser may be finding its niche again, under the direction of John Coleman, chief executive, and the kitchen sink job has certainly brought him time. Fraser's success will depend on re-establishing itself as the first choice department store in its chosen, generally provincial, locations. In spite of the optimistic tone of the comments, some of its London stores still seem to be worryingly short on customers.

Coleman is trying to address the problems that have dogged the business in the past: the catalogue ranges from merchandise to systems, underlining the poorly state of the company when he arrived. But he has decided he cannot do it alone. Students of consultancy fees will grimace as they learn that a key information technology project, "essential to the group's future success" is now in the tender care of Andersen Consulting.

Sugar and Spice

PICKING winners is something the Government has said it is anxious to avoid but Character Group, the quoted toy company, is demonstrating the rewards of the strategy. Character, the company that put Buzz Lightyear on toy shop shelves, has won the privilege, and profits, of distributing the official Spice Girls dolls. Sadly, the dolls will not be on sale in time for Christmas but would-be 11 Girls might prefer a few shares.

Adscene points the way to local press revival

By RAYMOND SNOODY
MEDIA EDITOR

ADSCENE, the local newspaper group, yesterday launched the first new paid-for weekly newspaper in Kent for a generation.

More than 26,000 copies of the *Canterbury Times* went on sale yesterday at 25p to compete against the existing *Kentish Gazette*, part of the Kent Messenger company.

David Fordham, managing director of Adscene's publishing division, said: "Our research shows there is room for an alternative."

There have not been competing paid-for local newspapers in *Canterbury* for more than 20 years, since the closure of the *Kentish Observer* and *Canterbury Times*. Paradoxically, the arrival of Adscene with its free papers in *Canterbury* may originally have made life difficult for paid-for titles there.

The *Canterbury Times* launch is further evidence of local and regional newspapers staging a comeback, partly because newsprint prices have fallen and classified advertising is currently high. The Newspaper Society, the regional press body, says that more than 50 per cent of local titles lifted circulation in the first half of this year.

Britton braced for hostile US takeover bid

By FRASER NELSON

BRITTON, the plastics and packaging group whose market value has crumbled this year, was last night braced for a hostile takeover battle after rejecting a £167 million approach from a US rival.

The company, which owns the largest standalone cardboard box producer in the US, dismissed the prospect of a 120p a share offer from rival Carastar Industries as "absurdly cheap." Robin Williams, Britton's chief executive, is understood to be seeking nearer 180p a share, which would value the recovering company at about £250 million — almost four times its July market value.

Carastar, a \$500 million packaging group listed in New York, was last night understood to be calling a board meeting to draw up terms for a formal hostile bid. Tom Brown, its president, said the company was not going to lift its valuation of £167 million.

He said: "The price we have mentioned would be a full and fair offer and we will certainly not chase this one any higher."

We just don't see Britton achieving the kind of earnings the analysts are forecasting. As an American company, we know the market is more competitive now than it has ever been."

Mr Williams, a former merchant banker who set up Britton five years ago, said company had been given less than 24 hours to respond to Carastar's suggestion of 120p a share. He said: "It would be mad to sell out for this price at a time when we are turning the company around. If they are buying an American business, they should pay American prices, which is substantially more than 120p a share."

Britton's main asset is UPC, which is the largest US cardboard carton market remaining independent of sawmills and pulp suppliers.

The company is the biggest buyer of carton-fodder in America, and has a 7 per cent share in the North American food box market. It had been suffering, slowing of sales growth, but last month won a £20 million contract to make

boxes for Kellogg's Pop Tarts. Carastar, by contrast, has less than 3 per cent of this market but has sawmills which it would like to link to UPC's factories. It has about 18 per cent of its other markets, which include cardboard tubes, laminated and facing paper.

Britton's shares shot from 85p to 117½p yesterday. They have fallen from 168p to 51p in the past 12 months, after the company gave warning of its slowdown in the US and problems with UK exports — which count for less than 15 per cent of sales. Analysts said the 120p was still cheap, coming as a 11.4 multiple to the expected 10.5p earnings per share Britton is expected to make next year.

One said that institutions, which own 80 per cent of the company's shares, were still fresh with the pain of watching the value of their investment plunge by 70 per cent over the past 12 months.

A statement from Carastar is expected today.

Tempus, page 28

LucasVarity names new chairman

By ADAM JONES

LUCASVARITY, the car parts and aerospace group, has appointed Ed Wallis, chairman of PowerGen, as its new non-executive chairman. Mr Wallis will succeed Sir Brian Pearce, 64, who is due to stand down at the annual meeting in May 1998.

Mr Wallis, 57, is already a non-executive director, having joined the board of Lucas Industries in 1995. He also chairs LucasVarity's audit committee.

Mr Wallis takes up the position of deputy chairman immediately in anticipation of Sir Brian's retirement. He described Sir Brian as the "leading architect" of the merger between Lucas Industries and Varity last year.

Reshuffle likely at BNB Resources

By JON ASHWORTH

DAVID NORMAN is expected to announce today that he is stepping back from the day-to-day running of BNB Resources, the recruitment to training group.

Graham Durgan, who runs BNB's training arm, is tipped to take over from Mr Norman, who is likely to become non-executive chairman.

Mr Norman is expected to remain chairman of Norman Broadbent International (NBI), the group's headhunting arm, which has suffered widespread defections in the past two years.

BNB publishes its results for the half year to June 30 today. The management reshuffle comes at a difficult time for Mr Norman, who has been struggling to compensate for loss of revenues at NBI. Former key NBI earners, including Miles Broadbent,

the NBI co-founder, and Julian Sainy, a financial services specialist, quit the firm in 1996.

However, they were obliged to hand more than 50 per cent of their earnings for the first 12 months, cushioning the impact of their departure.

These "lock-in" agreements expired earlier in the year. In a further blow, several NBI recruitment consultants have resigned, but are working out a one-year notice period.

NBI's operating income fell 33 per cent in the year to December 31 and is certain to have suffered a further steep decline. The figures may be buoyed by a contribution from Goodman Graham, an IT recruitment specialist.

Mr Norman declined to comment yesterday. Mr Durgan has been on the BNB board for five years.

Profits of marketing firms double

By RAYMOND SNOODY
MEDIA EDITOR

THE TOP 50 marketing services groups in the UK have almost doubled pre-tax profits to £332 million, the highest level since 1991, according to a new survey.

The annual Willott Kingston Smith survey, the accountants specialising in the sector, showed that spending by clients increased 7 per cent, compared with the previous year's growth of 10 per cent. But operating profit margins on gross income have improved from 9.1 per cent to 10.6 per cent.

Bob Willott, author of the seventh annual survey, says the overall impression is of a financially more stable and prosperous industry than for many years.

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

London gets a rough ride from Europe and the US

ANOTHER sharp opening fall on Wall Street, combined with a series of European interest rate rises, hammered share prices and government bonds on the London stock market.

Equities came under further pressure after another bad start, reflecting overnight losses in New York on the back of comments on Wednesday by Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve Chairman.

The decision of the Bank of England to peg interest rates at 7 per cent brought a sigh of relief. But it proved short-lived, with the Bundesbank's move to raise rates catching traders on the hop. This was followed by similar moves from the French, Belgian, Dutch and Danish central banks, while the centre-left Italian Government collapsed after the Communists withdrew support.

Traders were still struggling to contain the situation when the Dow Jones industrial average weighed in with fresh losses.

At one stage, the FTSE 100 index plunged 96 points, matching a similar loss for the Dow Jones industrial during the first hour of trading in New York.

But the absence of any real sell-off in London enabled the index to more than halve its earlier deficit to end a volatile session 44.3 down at 5,217.8. Total turnover reached 823 million shares.

Lloyds TSB retreated 8½p to 782½p amid whispers that it was planning a rights issue at 700p. The speculators say it wants the extra cash to bid for Norwich Union, unchanged at 348p.

But the speculators suffered a setback in Barclays Bank, with the shares falling 20p to 616.27½, after Commerzbank ruled itself out of the bidding for BZW. Barclays put BZW up for sale last week, but will be retaining the more lucrative parts. Some estimates claim the rump of the business is worth £500 million.

Short covering after Wednesday's steep fall lifted Bank of Scotland 15½p to 516½p, but rival Royal Bank of Scotland lost an early lead to finish 7½p easier at 680p despite some positive comments from NatWest Securities, the broker.

Overnight weakness in Hong Kong left HSBC nursing a loss of 43p at £20.55, while NatWest Bank fell



British Energy shares powered ahead, rising 21p

38½p to 935½p despite suggestions it may be close to finding a buyer for its investment banking arm.

Michael Green's Carlton Communications finished 7p cheaper at 528½p while Granada, its digital broadcast partner, was 2p firmer at 884½p. Between them they have set up British Digital Broadcasting to develop 20 new channels. Whispers in the

Square Mile suggest Bill Gates' Microsoft has been knocking at their door.

The rise in German rates hit those companies with operations there. RMC Group was the worst affected, falling 51p to 947p along with insurers such as General Accident. 54p off at £106.6½, and Guardian Royal Exchange, 10½p lower at £318p.

British Energy continued to make the most of this week's upgrade from Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, with a rise of 21p to 400p.

Britton Group stood out with a leap of 52½p at 117½p after receiving a bid approach from Carastars, the US group which was to negotiate an agreed 120p a share offer.

Britton said it would reject any such offer at that level. Such a bid would put a price tag on the paper and packaging group of £167 million.

T&N firmed 5p to 250½p with the speculators still pinning their hopes on Federal Mogul of the US raising its offer for the company. The current offer is worth 235p.

A profit warning took the shine off Elbitz, with the price ending 6p down at 30p. The household products group says sales in the first half have been below expectations.

United Assurance was a weak market, falling 16p to 481½p after HSBC James Capel, the broker, continued to take an increasingly bearish view of prospects.

News of the link-up with Sankyo of Japan put fresh life into Vanguard Media, 22½p better at 447½p.

Cole Telecom added a further 33p to 586½p as Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, reiterated its positive stance on the shares.

There has been a big buyer sniffing around in AIM-listed Freepages, unchanged at 35½p. Several large lines of stock went through on the ticker yesterday, including 250,000 at 35½p and a further 200,000 at 36p.

Shares of FNR Holdings were suspended at 22½p on AIM, pending clarification of the company's financial position.

GLT-EDGED: The rise in European interest rates turned the bond market on its head.

In the futures pit, the December series of the long gilt fell ½p to close at £118½, as the total number of contracts completed reached 136,000.

In long, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 fell sharply in late trading to close £1½ off at £115½, while in shorts Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was £1½ off at £103½.

NEW YORK: Trading calmed down after an early rout of blue chips in response to interest rate rises in Europe. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 41.99 points lower at 8,053.07.

US DRUG companies continue to outperform their European counterparts as optimism about the outcome of third-quarter earnings continues to improve. According to Kevin

Scotcher, of NatWest Securities, the broker, British drug companies are just 3 per cent above their relative 12-month low against the Americans, providing investors plenty of scope to pick up cheap stock.

Zeneca stood out with a jump of 25p to £21.32½, amid revived talk that Astra, the Swedish drug group may bid. Mr Scotcher is

sceptical: "Astra faces problems with the expiry of Losec, and any link-up with Zeneca is unlikely unless the group [Zeneca] can foresee problems with its cost base beyond 2001. That seems unlikely with Zeneca due to launch several new products soon."

He urges clients to switch out of Zeneca and into Glaxo Wellcome. "Investors should be looking for those companies with long-term sales. What looks like good sales growth today will not necessarily give good value in 12 months," he adds.

LOOKING FOR SALES GROWTH

FTSE 350 Pharmaceuticals Index

FTSE all-share index (rebased)

Source: Datastream

Oct '97 Nov '97 Dec '97 Jan '98 Feb '98 Mar '98 Apr '98 May '98 Jun '98 Jul '98 Aug '98 Sep '98

5,000 5,500 6,000 6,500 7,000 7,500 8,000 8,500

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MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 8053.07 (-41.99)
S&P Composite 970.41 (-3.43)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 17376.92 (-242.26)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 14273.12 (-565.40)

Amsterdam:
EEX Index 916.14 (-28.95)

Sydney:
AO 2732.30 (-46.20)

Frankfurt:
DAX 4243.01 (-104.23)

Singapore:
Straits 1863.07 (-18.96)

Brussels:
General 1386.37 (-194.57)

Paris:
CAC-40 2960.65 (-63.43)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 1220.60 (-13.10)

London:
FTSE 100 5217.8 (-96.3)

FTSE 250 4804.5 (-17.7)

FTSE 350 2504.6 (-19.0)

FTSE Eurotrack 100 2708.37 (-66.64)

FTSE All-Share 2451.49 (-17.64)

FTSE Non Financials 2460.82 (-14.28)

FTSE Fixed Interest 132.67 (-0.58)

FTSE Govt Secs 100.13 (-0.57)

Bergsma 481.12

SEAG Volume 1.628 (-0.0045)

German Mark 2.629 (-0.0162)

Exchange Index 102.12 (-0.2)

Bank of England official rate (4pm) 4.75%

LECU 1.4390

LSMR 1.1850

RPI 159.3 Sep (3.6%) Jan 1997-100

RPIX 157.8 Sep (2.7%) Jan 1997-100

RECENT ISSUES

Aggreko 171 - 2½

Buckland Inv Wts 10 -

Buckland Inv 17½ -

Calmar Dem IT 94½ -

Calmar Dem 16½ -

Cambridge Inv Wts 2 -

Cambridge Investments 2 -

Computer UK 140½ -

Creative Publishing 158½ - 2

IS Solutions 147½ -

Latchways (ISS) 174½ -

NSB Retail Sys 152½ - 2

Northern Rock 481½ -

SHL Group 267½ -

Consolid Coal n/p (5) 1½ -

Premier Asset n/p (13) 1½ -

MAJOR CHANGES

RISER:

Col Telecom 586½ (+33p)

Geahouse GP 385p (+18½p)

Hozelock 334p (+13p)

Peel 656p (+25p)

First Lease 291½p (+11p)

BTP 358p (+13p)

Casella Radio 528p (+16p)

Isht Corp 700p (+20p)

Select App 589p (+10½p)

FALLS:

Farco Egv 835p (-80p)

FRAC GP 947p (-51p)

Concor 173p (-8p)

Norbin 334p (-15p)

Unit Assurance 481½p (-16p)

GRE 318p (-10½p)

Jarvis 282p (-4p)

Mayer Int 422p (-15p)

Prudential 811p (-15p)

Royal & Sun Al 611p (-15p)

Br Airways 632p (-15p)

Redland 240p (-8p)

Caradon 180p (-8p)

Innovative Tech 170p (-8p)

Stetech Inv 320p (-8p)

SPB 350p (-8p)

Closing Prices Page 30

TEMPUS

IF US stock markets are exuberant, London is in a playful mood. The gyrations of the last two days suggest a degree of nervousness, but whose nerves are on edge? Alan Greenspan's third warning sent London market-makers into initial rapid retreat, but the volume of stock traded yesterday - 800 million shares - was no more than a normal day's trading.

Mr Greenspan's concern is that market valuations have run ahead of realistic expectations. A quick glance at the US market provides some scope for concern with the Standard & Poor's industrial index showing a historic price earnings ratio of 25. Such a ratio might suit a market in early recovery but Mr Greenspan fears that a tight labour market will soon command higher wages, leading to higher costs and weaker productivity. Hardly a recipe for earnings growth. Is

this the outlook in Britain? Perhaps, but the concerns are not nearly as acute. Unemployment is almost a percentage point higher and investors are expecting slower earnings growth. The FTSE 100 is discounting some 19 years of earnings on a historic basis and about 16.5 years looking a year ahead. A small upward move in interest rates in November is expected but thereafter the bond market says that rates will fall; better news for earnings as is the prospect of a weaker pound. Still, it is worrying to see high P/E's in a mature share market and the current high real interest rates makes cash look inviting. That is unlikely to sway British institutions, which are already cash rich and worried about keeping pace with the FTSE. Unless you can predict the market downturn, there is little point in worrying about exuberance.

healthier market with companies valued on multiples of 17 times. If Carastars was playing at home, its 120p offer would be laughed out of town and this is a US, not a British story.

Carastars insists it will not give chase. But the institutions do not appear keen to sell out leaving the American with three options:

crawl home, watch UPC walked up the aisle by one of its richer rivals, or eat its words and come up with a higher offer.

So far, the share market remains cautious, with the shares lingering at 117½p but no one, probably not even Cantor, thinks Britton will be plucked off the shelf for less than 130p.

JUST as it seemed that our downtrodden paper and packaging industry would never find a friend, an American suitor is sliding up to the securities duckling, Britton Group.

As this column pointed out last Saturday, Britton was ridiculously cheap at 78½p. Carastars offer of 120p, at 117½p next year's earnings, looks a less unreasonable price but either this American or another should be able to pay much more.

Carastars is after UPC. Britton's US hardware carton business. It cares little for the nappy-lining business in the UK. Carastars intends to integrate vertically UPC to its own sawmills. This would guarantee a flood of revenue while filling a hole in its packaging portfolio.

Stateside, packaging is a

rapidly, it is set to break into profit this year, and it should make serious money in 1998. It has also agreed a deal with Becton Dickinson, the large American healthcare company that is the leading supplier of culture plates to industrial microbiologists.

Even on the most conservative forecast, Celsis, at 98p, is priced at only 13 times next year's earnings and less than 10 times its own broker's profit estimate - not bad given the growth prospects. Celsis may finally be about to produce a result.

CHESTERTON has been a somewhat poor advertiser for the skills it purports to sell. The surveying firm is paying £2 million in rent on buildings it no longer requires. That liability, high overheads and generally poor accounting controls, will leave its investors nursing a thumping great loss for the year. Michael Holmes,

chief executive, is attempting to instil some discipline among the unruly wheelers and dealers that make up your average estate agent.

There is no reason why surveying should not be a profitable occupation and rival firms, such as Savills, make a decent return but this industry suffers from the same ailment as the securities industry: an obsessive desire to raise fixed costs. Surveyors, like investment bankers, want to be cosseted with fine buildings and high salaries, which could only be justified if the level of business at the peak of the cycle remained constant. If Holmes can pare down the cost-base, sell the tangential businesses and use the cash to buy out the lease liabilities, he will have a business worth running in a market that is looking good for the first time in half a decade. But this company is still in the operating theatre.

EDITED BY CLAR MORTIMER

BRITTON NEEDS BACKING

FTSE all-share index (rebased)

Britton share price

Source: Datastream

1995 1996 1997

40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

1995 1996 1997

40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

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Pressure is still on Germany against monetary tightening

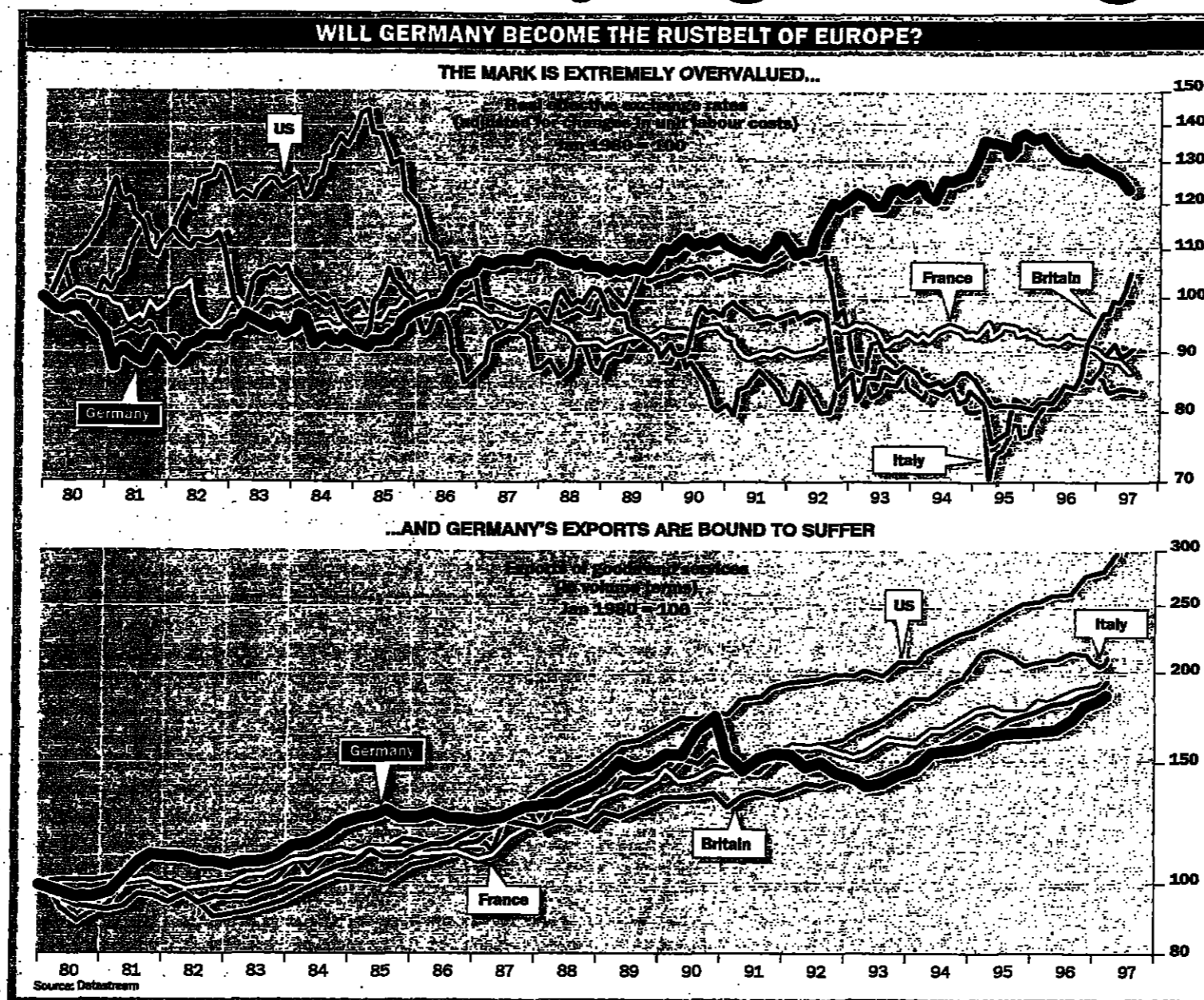
Germany cannot hope to live with relatively high rates appropriate for more dynamic economies

The Bundesbank, is Europe's most powerful economic institution. Its decision to raise interest rates just three days after the announcement of a new post-war record in Germany's unemployment gives the clearest possible indication of what lies in store for the whole of Europe once the power over monetary policy is transferred from one end of Frankfurt to the other — from the suburban headquarters of the Bundesbank to the equally non-descript offices of its clone institution, the European Central Bank.

With interest rates throughout Europe due to converge on a single figure by the time the arrangements for the single currency are finalised next May, many economists now assume that Germany and France will continue tightening their monetary policies. The final convergence figure pencilled in by most market commentators is around the "European average" level of 4.5 or even slightly higher. By acting yesterday in the interests of EMU, the Bundesbank was recognising the problems of Spain, Italy and Ireland.

These countries' central banks feel unable to cut their interest rates to anywhere near the present German level, because their economies have been adapted over many decades to operating with much higher rates. Even though inflation seems dormant in all of these high-interest rate countries, their authorities feel unable to ease their rates to German and French levels for fear of creating house-price bubbles, consumption booms and "excessive" rates of job creation and economic growth. By responding to these countries' concerns the Bundesbank and continuing to push up German interest rates over the next few months, the Bundesbank will provide a smooth transition to the full unification of European monetary policy next May.

There is, however, an alternative interpretation. German officials have been making it clear since the summer that some tightening of monetary policy was necessary — not because of EMU, but because of the inflationary pressures exerted in Germany by the falling mark. The mark declined by 20 per cent against the dollar between January and late July, having already fallen by 15 per cent in 1996. Something had to be done to prevent a loss of confidence in the German currency. The Bundesbank chose to support the mark through "verbal intervention". Instead of raising German interest rates or buying marks in the foreign exchanges, Bundesbank directors fed the markets with statements hinting that interest rates were about to be raised. This campaign proved remarkably successful at restoring confidence in the mark, but sooner or later the Bundesbank's credibility was bound to be challenged if its words were followed by no action at all. Some increase in German interest rates was, therefore, inevitable



this autumn. In any case, the Bundesbank always maintained that interest rates of 3 per cent were unsustainably low even in a country with anti-inflationary credentials as strong as Germany's. The question was when to move and by how much.

At this point, the Bundesbank faced two strong pressures against any dramatic monetary tightening — and still does. The argument that EMU interest rates should be set simply by averaging the German and Italian levels has long been dismissed as ridiculous by German officials. The single currency, they point out, is not supposed to average out Europe's performance: it is supposed to ensure that everyone converges on the performance in the best country (which is unquestionably Germany, at least in the Bundesbank's view). The euro must be the closest possible replica of the mark, not a chimera halfway between the German and Italian currencies. This symbolic argument, enthusiastically supported by the French, militates against the market's view that the ultimate target for German interest rates is 4.5 per cent or even higher.

The second argument against substantially higher German rates — and against the idea that monetary policy will converge next year at some pan-European mid-point — is much more important and will have profound implications for the economic and political future of Europe. It can be stated like this: Germany,

which used to be the strongest economy in Europe, is now the weakest. As a result of its deep-seated structural problems, Germany cannot hope to live with the relatively high interest rates that might be appropriate for more dynamic economies such as Italy, Ireland, and Spain, not to mention America or Britain.

Dynamic economies, with competitive cost structures and high returns to investment, can grow rapidly with real pre-tax interest rates of 4 per cent or even higher. Indeed they may need such high interest rates to restrain wages and prevent asset inflation or other financial bubbles.

But rigid and uncompetitive economies such as Germany need far lower rates to have any chance of pulling out of stagnation, maintaining investment levels and restoring more sensible cost structures. It may seem perverse to argue that Germany will need low interest rates for many years because its economy is structurally weaker than Italy or Spain. It may seem even more preposterous to suggest that the future monetary battles in the European Central Bank will be between Germans calling for lower rates and Spaniards, who demand that interest rates be raised.

But if such a suggestion brings reminders of a scene from Alice in Wonderland, just consider the case of Japan. Japan, even more than Germany, was viewed a few years

ago as an unstoppable economic powerhouse. Yet, as discussed on this page two weeks ago, Japan has actually had the weakest economy in the world since 1990. Short-term interest rates in Japan are now 0.5 per cent, while ten-year bond yields have just fallen below 1.75 per cent — and even then Japan is teetering on the edge of another recession.

There are many differences between the German and Japanese situations, but the two economies have one critical factor in common. Both allowed their currencies to become extremely overvalued, by pursuing misguided monetary policies. They allowed their costs to rise far out of line with the costs in other major industrialised countries. Worse still, they allowed their currencies and domestic costs to remain uncompetitive for long periods, under the illusion that their industries could continue to sell in world markets on the basis of "quality not price". As a result their export and manufacturing industries suffered grievous damage. As the charts show, Germany's currency is hugely overvalued compared with the dollar, pound, lira and French franc — and Germany has had the weakest exports among these major countries.

The damage done to manufacturing and trade, in turn, locked both Japan and Germany into vicious circles of falling employment, rising public deficits and inadequate domestic demand.

In the last few months it is true that Germany's exports have been growing rapidly — far more rapidly than domestic demand. But this is just a "dead cat bounce" from the exceptionally depressed levels of the last few years. As I have argued repeatedly on this page, much of Germany's export growth is simply a function of the hollowing out of the German economy. Germany companies are selling machinery to the overseas subsidiaries of other German companies setting up production bases in lower-cost locations. As long as Germany's labour costs remain some 40 per cent higher than they are in France, Italy, America and Britain, this process is bound to continue, since any productivity gains achieved by Germany companies are likely to be matched in the other countries.

There are, in principle, only two ways for Germany to escape from this trap of uncompetitive costs. Either it must devalue its currency or it must reduce the absolute levels of German wages. By locking into EMU at an uncompetitive exchange rate Germany has foreclosed the first option. And next year Germany may well foreclose the second option by electing a Social Democratic government, committed to raising wages and social costs. Under these circumstances anyone who believes that the Bundesbank will be a force for high interest rates and a strong currency in Europe should take a look at the Bank of Japan.

Insider tells a bloody tale of life on Wall Street

Oliver August on a new book alleging clients are just prey for derivative traders

Testosterone makes Wall Street tick — not money. That is the conclusion of a new kiss-and-tell book written by Frank Partnoy, a former employee of Morgan Stanley.

He alleges that some traders at Morgan Stanley, Wall Street's biggest investment bank, had put the bank's profits ahead of clients' interests.

In *Fiasco — Blood in the water on Wall Street*, Mr Partnoy unleashes a torrent of damning tales that has given the book instant notoriety and prompted a defensive letter from Morgan Stanley managers to their staff.

Mr Partnoy's book describes one senior manager as a "gun-toting strip-joint connoisseur who kept a bottle of Scotch in his desk and walked the trading floor, cigar clenched, telling obscene jokes".

At Credit Suisse First Boston, where Mr Partnoy was also employed, "one senior mortgage trader paid a notably attractive sales assistant \$500 to eat, slowly and carefully, a large pickle covered with hand lotion. A throng of traders admired her as she performed the feat, accepted the cash, and then was sick violently all over the trading floor."

Such scenes echo the worst excesses of the 1980s Wall Street culture. *Fiasco* is already being described as the next *Liar's Poker*, the book that immortalised the arrogance, the machismo and

\$40,000 to shoot a rhinoceros.

The culture of violence was reflected in the language used in Morgan Stanley offices. After some high-profile client losses, a belligerent John Mack, Morgan Stanley's president, told his traders: "There is blood in the water. Let's go kill."

Michael Lewis, author of *Liar's Poker*, calls derivatives trading "a blood sport, with the unsuspecting consumer as the prey", and says "FIASCO is a ringside seat on the nastiest and most important game being played on Wall Street today."

Mr Partnoy says he is anxious to expose mis-selling of derivatives on Wall Street. These complex financial instruments are, he claims, often sold to ignorant clients with the sole purpose of earning fees. Mr Partnoy says Morgan Stanley earned \$1 billion in fees from derivatives alone in 1993 to 1995.

His book describes the goings-on that led up to the famous derivatives fiasco, involving Barings, in the UK, and Orange County and Procter & Gamble in America.

Mr Partnoy also alleges that Morgan Stanley started selling Mexican derivatives in the days leading up to the 1994 Mexican economic collapse. Some clients were still under the impression that they should be buying the derivatives.

The bank is understandably concerned. It has told its employees: "The book is clearly a combination of inaccuracies and sensationalism. Our business is based on consistent and professional service to our clients and customers."

Mr Partnoy left Morgan Stanley in 1995 and now teaches law in California. His knowledge of libel and defamation laws makes the book especially damning.

A ringside seat on the nastiest game on Wall Street today?

Taste change

IT MUST be heartening when shares in your employer fall on news of your departure, but the slump for the National Westminster that was being put down yesterday morning to the loss of NatWest Markets' deputy head of global research looks a bit overdone, as my colleague on the Tempus column would put it. I suppose the market is rather sensitive to bad news from any investment bank at the moment. Anyway, David Atkinson is off, entirely amicably, after 13 years as a food manufacturing analyst, the past eight at NatWest.

Atkinson was appointed

head of European research at the end of 1996, a management role he did not take to. He took on the global research post as deputy to Edmund Warner in July, promptly embarking on a sabbatical. "He wants to do something completely different, but he doesn't know what," says Warner.

Atkinson admits to disenchantment with the job of running a research department but no temptation to go back to teenage scribbling. "I've got to the point of deciding that there's more to life than that." His most likely option, when he makes up his mind, will be a corporate finance job in the City advising the food industry.

THE last word on those stories of shoe boxes and broom cupboards being sold as flats for silly sums of money, I rather liked the one near Harvey Nicks that the estate agent said "would suit shopaholic" — where would they put the stuff? A two-bedroom executive flat is for sale on the fourth floor of a Grade II listed Mayfair town house. The rest of the building has been done up by the vendor as offices. Offers in excess of £4 million. The price is so high because you have to buy the whole building as well.

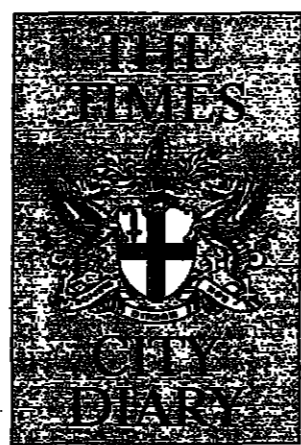


Figure it out

I WOULD hate anyone to lose any sleep, but I have two more concerns for those of you who are still worrying about the millennium bug, the feared shutdown of the world's computer systems in little more than two years. Try these. One is the year 2000 a leap year? Not as simple as you might think, because years ending in two noughts contain a February 29 only if the year is also divisible by 400. I am indebted to JP Morgan for this information. You didn't know it either, did you? Nor, perhaps, does your computer. The year 2000 is a leap year, but computers may or may not include an extra day in their calculations. Alternatively, they may have the cybernetic equivalent of a nervous break-

down once the clocks strike midnight on February 28, 2000, having only just recovered from their attack of the wobbles two months previously.

Two, September 9, 1999, is another panic point, I am told, because this writes itself 9/9/99, and there is a temptation for electronic brains to flip over into 10,000 the next day and disappear forever into the next eon. Time alone will tell.

NICHOLAS SOAMES has been appointed a non-executive director of Network Technology. He was full of praise for his former employer yesterday "a remarkable company" — "really excellent" — while admitting he knew precious little about their actual business, gizmos that allow one part of a computer network to talk to another. Fair enough. He is also the local MP, although only after his move from Crawley where the Tories lost — the safer Mid Sussex seat. There seems to be some mismatch, though. Network Technology, a tiddler that moved from the AIM to a full listing only two months ago, is described to me as "lean and mean". Which is more than can be said of the former Agriculture Secretary.

Tartan tussle

BLOOD spilt among the Scottish financial mafia. At Ivory & Sime Enterprise Capital, the in-

vestment trust under fire from Colin McLean's Scottish Value Trust. Gavin Reed, the chairman, and fellow directors are to run the gauntlet at a special meeting brought by Scottish Value. Reed yesterday denied rumours that they were about to resign. McLean is unhappy that the lacklustre Enterprise has carried on investing in early-stage companies in spite of the rapid approach of its winding-up date. Ivory & Sime is bound lose the management contract for Enterprise if a new board is appointed. This will only increase pressure on Sir David Kinloch to find a buyer for the poor old firm, now another troubled offshoot of the Cayzer family's interests. What ever happened to the Cayzers' fabled skills?

MARTIN WALLER



Nicholas Soames is full of praise for his new employer, Network Technology.

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BY ADAM JONES

Many in the market had expected some kind of asset swap. However, it was announced last month that GEC had failed to make a shortlist of two, denting the share price and leaving a cloud over the

Mr de Tray said that a team of experts will arrive in Indonesia by Monday. He said that the team's main objective would be to restore confidence in Indonesia's currency rather than to provide financial back-up, which was not a crucial

Lindsay Page, finance director, left, and Ray Kelvin, chief executive, of Ted Baker, have a strong first half to look back on

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

counter | Sp

oice Girl do

lls join the

BY OUR CITY STAFF

Mr de Tray said that a team of experts will arrive in Indonesia by Monday. He said that the team's main objective would be to restore confidence in Indonesia's currency rather than to provide financial back-up, which was not a crucial

BY FRASER NELSON

If the Spice Girls' pop success continues, the deal could bring in up to £14 million in sales next year alone. If the group splits up, or falls from grace, the company will

dolls may be shown in early enough to allow some deliveries in time for the new year. The company expects to import 500,000 models by March, with dolls of each Spice Girl produced in equal

The shares, which joined the market at 65p two years ago, rose 21p to a high of 147½p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

The plants National Power has bought have a total electrical generating capacity of 825 megawatts and 3,900 megawatts of heat, National Power said. The company said it has the ability to take a majority position in the company in the future. The deal will make National Power the largest shareholder in EOP, a cogeneration company listed on the Prague stock exchange. Its other shareholders include Czech municipalities, with 24 per cent, and other overseas interests with 18 per cent. National Power shares yesterday fell from 549½ p to 534½ p.

BRITISH DREDGING, the building materials group, raised pre-tax profits by 30 per cent to a little more than £1 million in the six months to June 30 on sales up 15 per cent to £21.8 million. Earnings rose 32 per cent to 3.91p and the half year dividend rises to 2.9p, up 11.5 per cent. Michael Brown, chairman, said the company remained in excellent condition: "Our plans for sustained growth, with new ventures created both organically and through acquisition, are progressing steadily." The shares rose 1½p to 147½p.

KIER GROUP, the construction company formerly owned by Hanson, saw profits rise 17 per cent in its first full-year results since listing. In the year to June 30, the group, floated last December, reported pre-tax profits of £8.6 million. Earnings rose to 18.7p (16.1p). A final dividend of 4.6p per share (1.6p) will be paid on December 16. Turnover rose 10.2 per cent to £677 million. Colin Busby, chairman, said the UK construction cycle is "progressively improving for the first time in more than five years".

THE final dividend at BWI, the packaging and process machinery group, has been cut after £1.5 million of exceptional restructuring costs hit profits. Pre-tax profits for the year to July 31 were £7 million, down from £8.3 million. The exceptional charge included £1 million for measures to be taken this year. Earnings fell to 7.7p a share from 12.4p. A final dividend of 2p, cut from 4.3p, is due on January 5, making a total of 5p (7.3p) for the year. The group said order intake had strengthened in the past two to three months.

UNITED INDUSTRIES, the engineering group, raised pre-tax profits by 19 per cent to £1.42 million in the six months to June 30 on sales up by 3 per cent to £19.6 million. Earnings rose to 2.7p, up by 19 per cent, out of which the half-year dividend is raised by 13 per cent to 0.85p a share. Kenneth Coates, chairman, said the group had reduced costs and concentrated on organic growth to offset sterling's strength: "Group management will continue to drive these improvements and is firmly committed to making suitable acquisitions."

BY CHRIS AYRES

Gummer: refused

The court's ruling means a review of the decision of John Gummer, who as Secretary of State for the Environment,

Many residents of Eastleigh are in favour of the development and have handed a petition containing 800,000 signatures to their MP. But in spite of local

John Prescott, Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, will now examine the planning inspectors' report and decide whether to launch a new public inquiry into the project or take written statements from interested parties before making a decision.

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The organisation which demonstrates, in their response to this advertisement, previous experience in the above will be invited to complete a pre-tender questionnaire which will be used to select a maximum of four organisations to be invited to submit bids for the

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Company Number: 02989020
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,
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PRODUCTS INCORPORATED, an
Insolvency Act 1986, s. 74,
company, for the purpose of a
meeting of conditions of
the 898 meeting, shall be
held at Queens Avenue House, 49-51
Queens Avenue, St. Vincent,
on Wednesday, 27 October 1997, at 10.30 a.m. for
the purpose mentioned in
Section 898 of the
Insolvency Act 1986,
of the P. & T. Chamber of Deputies &
Company, Limited, 49-51
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49-51 will provide conditions free of
charge for the purpose of the
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shall be made available. Further
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Denis Taylor reports from Taiwan, a leading investor in Britain and a hotbed of enterprise, despite being under the shadow of Beijing

Powerhouse of the Pacific Rim

Taiwan is the perfect place for a futurologist. There is a doomsday script in which the Asian "tiger" is overwhelmed, and another in which it bounds prosperously ahead. Mainland China plays a critical role in both.

Cut off politically and diplomatically from most of the international community for two decades, the 21 million Chinese people on Taiwan — an island only slightly bigger than Belgium — have defied Beijing and built up their island refuge to become one of the world's top 20 economies.

Yet Beijing has repeatedly signalled that if Taiwan declares independence — or even makes moves towards doing so — it will be attacked. Mainland China enjoys an advantage of nearly 7-1 in the total number of its armed forces.

But Taiwan has been upgrading its naval and air forces, notably through acquiring American F16 and French Mirage 2000 fighters. The army is installing the latest Patriot missiles.

Despite China's enormous manpower advantage, question marks are raised in Taiwan about the Beijing Government's ability to mount a successful invasion. Dr Chong-Pin Lin, vice-chairman of the Mainland Affairs Council in Taipei, suggests that it could be 2010 before Beijing has the military technology to allow it to attempt an invasion.

But even then Chinese forces would not be able to cross the Taiwan Strait undetected by the Americans, and would risk a swift military reaction by Washington. In a muscle-flexing move, President Clinton sent two aircraft carriers to the Taiwan Strait last year after missiles were fired from the mainland into waters around the island. This was immediately before the



Prime Minister Siew, before a portrait of Sun Yat-sen, leads a thriving economy, right

first direct leadership election in Chinese history, which returned President Lee Teng-hui to office.

Washington's continuing seriousness about protecting Taiwan was underlined by the expansion of US-Japanese military co-operation announced last month. Taiwan was not mentioned by name in the new guidelines, but a senior official in Tokyo made clear that the Taiwan Strait was covered by the new agreement and that Japanese naval vessels could support US ships patrolling the waters around Taiwan.

Beijing was swift to attack the new deal as a violation of Chinese sovereignty, and there is the rub. Taiwan, to which Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces fled, was seen by the victorious communists of 1949 as a rebel province of China. For Chiang, the argument was reversed. The mainland was to be recovered by the Nationalists of the Republic of China from Taipei.

Each side says there is one China, but Chiang's successors in the

Kuomintang continue to insist they are the custodians of the original Chinese Republic founded by Sun Yat-sen, whose revolt against the Manchu Dynasty 86 years ago today is marked as Double Tenth national day.

In 1978, President Carter recognised Beijing. Then the US Congress passed an act pledging to help defend Taiwan. Yet while ties with the US remain strong, ambivalent feelings sometimes surface. "I'm glad Clinton sent those carriers. I wasn't sure that he would," said one observer in Taipei.

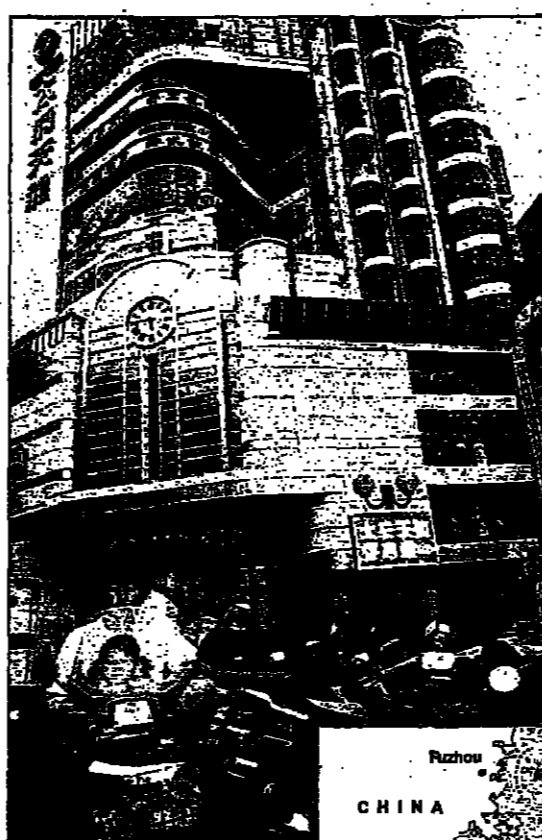
An official said: "Our country and the United States do have a large number of parallel interests. But we cannot rely on other countries for our survival and security." This may be a healthy antidote to the more prevalent view that the US will always take the side of Taiwan.

Beijing angrily broke off a cross-strait dialogue in 1995 after President Lee was granted a US visa to visit his old university, Cornell.

Any thought of reconquering the mainland has long been abandoned by Taipei. Today the very idea of 21-million strong Taiwan taking over the 1.2 billion inhabitants of the People's Republic of China looks absurd.

Vincent Siew, Taiwan's new Prime Minister, defines the goal of Taiwan's policy as the unification of China under the principles of democracy, freedom and the equitable distribution of wealth. Mr Siew last week welcomed a call by Beijing for new talks, but said they should take place without any restrictions and putting aside the dispute over sovereignty.

While any talking is clearly an improvement on silence and bouts of missile firing, it is hard to see



where talks between such entrenched adversaries can lead. Taiwan has no interest in Beijing's policy of one country, two systems, as applied to Hong Kong. According to Dr Lin, the issues of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan are "closely packed" by Beijing. "Taiwan is already feeling pressure for an agreement," he says.

Dr Lin adds that the Chinese leadership has adopted a batch of policies to bring pressure on Taipei, including efforts to persuade states which recognise Taiwan to switch to Beijing.

Optimists can point out that while the latest quarterly poll in Taiwan showed support for independence as soon as possible reaching 10 per cent, double that for unification, 82 per cent opted for some variant of the status quo. The poll includes subdivisions for people who hope

for eventual independence or unification, but see no point in rocking the boat.

No declaration of independence means no invasion. War would destroy not only one of Asia's most successful economies, but would also end Taiwan's role in the modernisation of mainland China.

An estimated 35,000 Taiwanese companies are doing business on the mainland. Hong Kong is still treated as the halfway house that it was in colonial days, and there are airline flights between Hong Kong and Taipei. Ships sail directly from one port in Taiwan to two on the mainland, getting around the sovereignty issue by using flags of convenience. "Business is business," said an official.

Officials from both sides of the strait meet unofficially. One in Taipei said that his communist visitors posed as academics "but we know who they are".

The optimist who sees Hong Kong taking over China rather than the reverse can add Taiwan entrepreneurs to the cast. But in Taiwan, even the optimist must keep his fingers crossed. The benign draft cannot stay unaltered when the only certain future is one of continuing political tension.

Buoyant UK is top priority

INVESTMENT

TAIWANESE investment in Britain is going from strength to strength. The lack of diplomatic relations has meant that Taiwan businessmen have used overseas investment to build partnerships with host countries.

The UK is Taiwan's number one target in terms of investment in Europe. Although Britain has fewer investments than Germany or the Netherlands, the overall value is far higher, at \$1.03 billion, than that for Germany, its nearest rival, at \$126 million.

Wilfred Sing, a partner in the accounting firm Simmons Gainsford, which has brought a number of Taiwan companies to Britain, says the Taiwanese find this country attractive because of the language and the advanced infrastructure and telecommunications systems.

Britain also has a versatile workforce that is willing to work long, flexible hours. Mr Sing says the legacy of the Commonwealth means that the British understand the Chinese mentality.

He notes that while research capabilities in Britain are excellent, Taiwanese companies have the ability to turn research into products, which creates a complementary role for joint ventures.

Conversely, there are many opportunities for UK business in Taiwan, which is involved in numerous joint ventures with the mainland and can be used as a gateway to that market. There is also a desperate need in Taiwan for English language teachers.

Taiwan is intent on increasing its overseas investment. Acer Europe, for example, is planning substantial new investments in Europe and will be floating on the London stock exchange by the year 2000. Graham Jackson, managing director of Acer UK, says the decision to float the European operation in London is linked to the fact that Britain will be the largest personal computer market in Europe before the year 2000.

RUTH TAPLIN

Many friends overcome few relations

WHEN President Lee Teng-hui went to Rome to see the Pope, there were no meetings with the Italian Government. Life is like that for leaders of Taiwan, which has full diplomatic relations with only one European state, the Holy See.

That does not stop Taipei trading with most of the world, but it is hurt that only about 30 states, the majority of them very small, have kept full links after most countries decided that it was only realistic to recognise Beijing. Taipei lost a big prize when South Africa announced that it would switch ties, but said they should take place without any restrictions and putting aside the dispute over sovereignty.

His Government is trying to induce companies to diversify away from mainland China. Panama is of obvious interest to Taiwan shipping interests, and Paraguay is part of Mercosur, the South

American common market. But business has been very cautious about following the flag to such areas.

Lack of embassies has not stopped commerce, and Taiwan is now the 14th largest trader in the world. But it has no seat at the United Nations

and no membership of the World Trade Organisation. Taiwan observers were barred from the recent annual meetings of the International

Monetary Fund and the World Bank in Hong Kong. The Republic of China was a founding member of Gatt, but lost its membership when Mao Zedong came to power, was given observer status and then had this withdrawn when Beijing was awarded

China's seat at the UN. But whatever the complaints about lack of access to governments elsewhere, there are said to be no complaints about the way Washington has been briefing Taipei on the visit of President Jiang Zemin there later this month.

RUTH TAPLIN



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The keys to Western-style prosperity

Once Taiwan put the shirt on your back. Now it is more likely to ship a personal computer to your home. Taiwan is the third-largest producer of computer hardware. It makes more than 60 per cent of all personal computers and keyboards and 70 per cent of computer mice.

This is a far cry from the toys once associated with the country. Much basic manufacturing has been shunted off to mainland China, where wage rates are a fraction of those in Taiwan.

Gross national product is this year expected to reach \$300 billion, with GNP per capita rising to \$14,000. This puts Taiwan ahead of the poorest members of the European Union.

The economy is expected to grow by at least 6.2 per cent this year, compared with 5.7 per cent in 1996. The unemployment rate has almost doubled during the 1990s, but is still below 3 per cent. The population is highly literate and the workforce is skilled. Many people speak English and think globally, a useful characteristic in a society where exports account for 70 per cent of GNP.

Industries expected to perform well this year include information technology (IT), electronics, chemicals and textiles. Among the fastest-growing exports are IT, telecommunications equipment and steel. Overseas sales of footwear, sporting goods and toys are declining.

Small and medium-sized firms dominate the economy. This is both its strength and its weakness. Small companies are flexible and can adapt quickly to the marketplace. But Taiwan has to buy in advanced IT products from America and Japan. Small firms have enough problems securing bank loans, let alone obtaining the funds to finance research and development (R&D). And basic computer production can be done much more cheaply on the Chinese mainland.

The shift of routine manufacturing to much less developed societies in China and South-East Asia is a sign of Taiwan's increasing economic maturity.

Taipei can look north to a stagnant Japan and south to the turmoil in the financial markets of the Association of South East Asian Nations and congratulate itself on doing rather well.

A planned high-speed western corridor rail link, which will cut travelling time to the south by more than half and with intermediate stations linked to a series of new towns, is billed as the biggest new infrastructure project in the world.

That is a clear sign of current confidence. The real challenges are long-term. Michael Porter, a Harvard management expert, has told officials that Taiwan should concentrate on capturing cutting-edge high-technology industries.

In its 1997-98 "white paper", the American Chamber of Commerce in Taipei argues that deficiencies in the present infrastructure, including water and electricity shortages, would make Mr Porter's ideas harder to put into effect.

There are hundreds of computer hardware manufacturers in Taiwan making the products that are its biggest export earner. But while lauding their achievement, there is official recognition of a weakness in the way the sector is run. A handful of firms at the top of the IT industry are committed to R&D. But small and medium-sized companies make up 85 per cent of the sector.

Beyond the debate about the future shape of Taiwan's economy lies the China question. How far should Taiwan business become involved in the fastest-growing economy on earth?

Businessmen and politicians are pulling in different directions. President Lee Teng-hui has been sending the message "Think of Taiwan's security. Do not over-commit yourselves on the mainland."

It will be interesting to see how Vincent Siew, Prime Minister since last month, and a politician with a strong background in economic affairs, copes with this particular China syndrome.

DENIS TAYLOR



Changing fortunes: reflecting the growing wealth of the island are the first Chinese-language Vogue, the spread of credit cards and a market for expensive fashions

TAIWAN offers many lifestyles. This may be the most densely inhabited place on earth after Bangladesh, but there is still room for choice. Denis Taylor writes. The restaurants offer styles of cooking from many different regions of the Chinese mainland. Some local cooking even blends Chinese and Japanese influences.

There is now a vogue for Japanese food and films among young people who have no memories of the time when the occupiers forbade the teaching of Chinese.

Then there is the choice of which Chinese dialect to use. Mandarin is the lingua franca, as it is on the mainland. But some prefer to speak Southern Fukinese, the dialect of settlers who moved to Taiwan long before the Nationalist forces of Chiang Kai-shek.

Schoolbooks for young children now dwell on the history of Taiwan, which had only a few Chinese settlers and aboriginal inhabitants when the Dutch arrived there in the 17th century. This educational development is not well received by those

bred to the idea that they are the heirs to 5,000 years of Chinese culture.

But the Chinese are adept at absorbing foreign influences while remaining as Chinese as ever. In Taipei there are branches of French and Italian fashion houses and American fast-food outlets. The young wear the latest international fashions, listen to rock music and often speak English well. They are the first Chinese who can vote for political movements of their choice, such as the rising Democratic Progressive Party.

But the Chinese street is never far away, with its traditional, sometimes rickety buildings. Taipei has Western classical concerts, Chinese and Taiwanese opera. There are discotheques and traditional tea-houses.

Where Western and Chinese trends meet is at the cinema. The islanders are keen cinemagoers. The Taiwan film industry once made more than 100 films a year. Output is sharply down, but productions such as *Eat Drink Man Woman* win international awards.

CULTURE

MOST great stories of art treasures are about how they were discovered by archaeologists, Denis Taylor writes. But there is nothing quite like the long march of China's artworks across thousands of miles of war-torn territory before they found a home at the National Palace Museum, on a hillside in a Taipei suburb, a permanent reminder that Taiwan's heritage is Chinese.

Some of the items, such as the bronze vessels, are thousands of years old. The collection was begun in the late 10th century AD, when the Sung Dynasty Emperor Tai-tsung ordered officials to search for fine examples of calligraphy and paintings dispersed among the people. The collection was notably increased in the early 12th century, but was soon broken up during a rebellion.

Some items were seized by Tartars. Others ended up in the hands of the general population. So the Emperor Kao-tsung had to start again. The Mongol invasion and dynastic changes meant that the collection was switched between cities.

After the last Emperor, the now deposed Henry Pu Yi, was ordered out of the Forbidden City in 1924, the Palace Museum Collection was opened to the public. But the Japanese attack in Manchuria led to the collection being moved to Shanghai. This was the start of 16 years of wandering, as the collection was switched to Nanjing and into the interior of China and back again to evade Japanese and later communist armies.

The collection, which also includes ceramics, jade and lacquer, fans and tapestries, carvings and rare books was finally shipped to Taiwan in 1949.

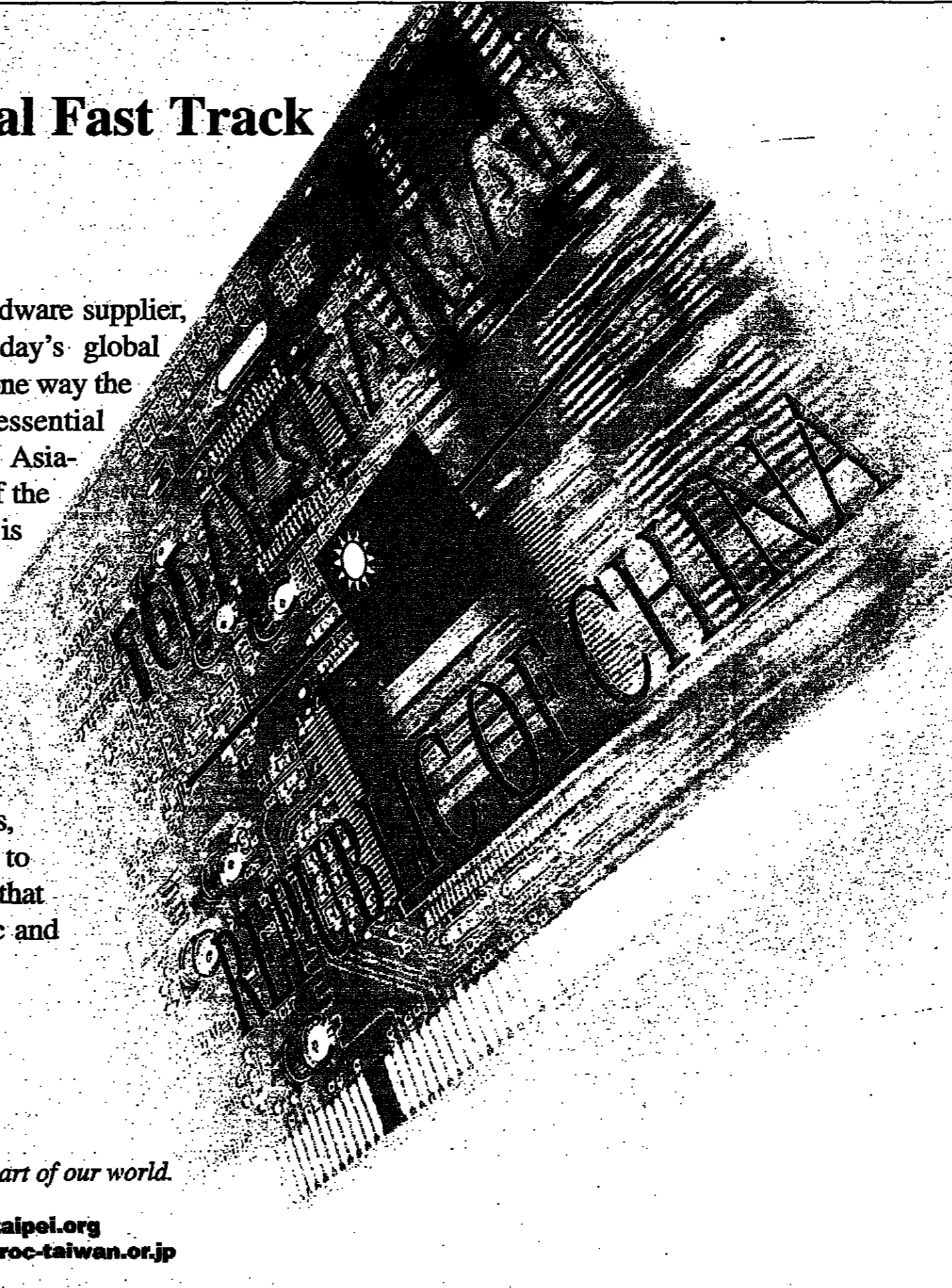
The museum says that though some of the items had to be left behind, staff who had been involved in earlier migrations during the Japanese invasion made sure that all the best works were shipped out.

They were stored until the present museum opened in 1965. There are estimated to be 600,000 items. It is impossible to show all of them at once, so displays at the world's greatest museum of Chinese art are rotated.

Taiwan: On the Global Fast Track

As the world's third-largest computer hardware supplier, Taiwan is already a key player in today's global economy. Information technology is but one way the Republic of China is becoming an essential component of regional growth in the Asia-Pacific and an increasingly integral part of the international community. Democracy is thriving on Taiwan, and the island is working to become an Asia-Pacific Regional Operations Center, with intriguing investment possibilities for foreign transnational corporations.

Staying at the cutting edge of technology requires constantly scoring breakthroughs, and the Republic of China continues to demonstrate the vitality and innovation that has put Taiwan at the technical, economic and political forefront of Asia.



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Look



What if I announced in advance that I was going to give you 900 words about the proposed new Regional Music Centre in Gateshead? You would shudder. Your eyes would glaze over. Your limbs would turn to jelly. The paper would slip from your limp fingers, and you would stagger towards something more riveting, like the Tory party conference on the telly.

So I shall dissemble. This is really a fairytale about how musical life could exist in an ideal country at an ideal time. It would be a place in which men and women of vision are backed by enlightened politicians and resourceful bureaucrats, and cynicism is unknown in the ranks of orchestras, and all children have wonderful opportunities to develop their instrumental and choral talents, irrespective of whether their families are on the dole or rolling in cash. In short, it's the place I visit in my dreams. Except that this fairytale is really going to happen. In Gateshead, in four

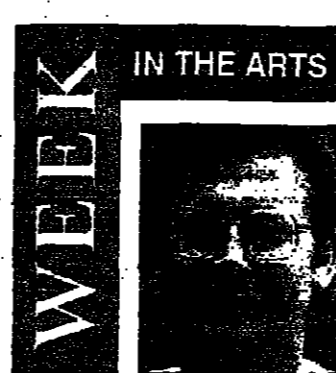
years' time. Well, let's say six — British builders are involved.

But what really endears Gateshead's Regional Music Centre to me is its phoenix quality. This is a bird that has soared from the ashes of pessimism, a victory snatched from the jaws of defeat, a winning break on a cloth untrue with a twisted cue and elliptical billiard balls. I think you get my drift, and drift it certainly is. For years our orchestras have been rubbished, written off, pitied. Buffeted by falling audiences, falling subsidies, falling record sales and jeremiads in the press, they appeared to be spinning towards a sad little *Götterdämmerung* all their own.

Then a band comes along — it's the Northern Sinfonia — which, in tandem with a "can do" town council, has planned a future that not only preserves local musical

life but immeasurably enriches it. It intends to pulverise the notion that an orchestra is simply a group of people paid to give concerts in quaint costumes. Instead, it takes its cue from a celebrated statement hitherto honoured more by quotation than by action: Pierre Boulez's remark that "the orchestra is an ensemble of possibilities which excludes absolutely nothing".

What the Northern Sinfonia plans is a traditional concert-giving role run in parallel with a whole new community responsibility. Its players will sometimes divide into smaller ensembles and embark on schools' tours. Or they will work with young composers in colleges. Or they will provide expert inspiration to children just starting out on the long journey towards mastery of an instrument — following the excellent Scandinavian principle that you must



RICHARD MORRISON

persuade the best players to teach the youngest kids, so they pick up good habits straight away.

In short, the orchestra — which already serves a huge swath of the North with its concerts — will

reinvent itself as something much more a focus for an entire region's musical aspirations, amateur and professional. And that's where the Regional Music Centre comes in. Sited right next to the magnificent Baltic Flour Mills project (which will bang the same sort of drum for the visual arts) the Regional Music Centre — gosh, I'd give them a fiver myself if they came up with a snappier title — will include not only two halls but a music teaching centre as well. Norman Foster will design it. And it won't just embrace classical music: Folk works, the region's pioneering traditional-music agency, will also operate there.

Of course, such centres are not new. In Leipzig 150 years ago Mendelssohn established exactly that sort of regional music hot-house at the Gewandhaus — and that institution has flourished as a

great orchestra and a focus for a community's culture. Indeed it was symbolic, and rather touching, that when communism crumbled in 1989 the Leipzig citizens flocked to the Gewandhaus, and its director Kurt Masur, for guidance.

In America, too, some orchestras have realised that survival into the 21st century means going out into the communities — yes, even the black and Hispanic communities — and making friends, not sitting tight in the concert hall. Nor is the Northern Sinfonia the only enlightened orchestra in Britain. The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra has pioneered excellent educational projects. The London Symphony Orchestra has grasped the vital truth that television is the key to all mass audiences, and is

forging ahead with bold plans to televise itself. The Bournemouth orchestras, too, have revolutionary community plans.

All these orchestras know that if they don't do the missionary work for music, nobody else will. Certainly not the schools, most of which can't scrape together enough pennies for a penny whistle these days. But I still think the Northern Sinfonia's plans are the boldest and best, because (although they have had fine music directors) they haven't had a one-in-a-million figurehead like Simon Rattle, or loads of City backing like the LSO, or a large middle-class hinterland to support them, like the Bournemouth orchestras.

So three cheers for them. And a pat on the back for the Arts Council for being enlightened enough to give them an extra £1.7 million grant last month to help them to achieve their dream. My goodness, it pains me to write that sentence. But one must give credit where it is due. War will be resumed next week.

Look north for the future of music

Not the genuine Oscar

Merlin Holland laments the disturbing inaccuracies in *Wilde*, the new film portrayal of his grandfather



In the flesh: the real Wilde as a fashionable undergraduate at Oxford in April 1876

There is an unhealthy preoccupation in our family with the selling of souls. My grandfather warned the Victorians of the dangers in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and promptly disposed of his own to a beautiful and tempestuous young man called "Bosie" Douglas. I nearly sold mine for 30 pieces of silver a year ago, but my integrity got the better of me.

Marc Samuelson, producer of the new film on Oscar Wilde, asked if I would consider a role as consultant on the life of my grandfather. It appeared to be a flattering offer. All too often the heirs to literary estates, worried about having the image of their ancestors tarnished by scandal, are tiresomely uncooperative with film-makers and biographers. Wilde's case is different since most of the skeletons fell out of the family cupboard in 1895 and we have nothing left to conceal. In two decades of researching his life and works I have stated publicly that I would never whitewash him.

During that lunch I expressed surprise that the producer had purchased film rights to Richard Ellmann's biography of Wilde. It was merely a "safety measure", was the explanation, so I warned him of the pitfalls in Ellmann and waited to see a screenplay.

I waited for a year. It arrived three weeks before filming was due to start. Wilde's homosexuality was the mainstay of the film. It included a scene of Oscar playing voyeur to Bosie's activities with a rent boy at the Savoy, for which there is not a scrap of evidence.

I have no problem at all with the portrayal of my grandfather's homosexuality, but it should remain only a part and not be sensationalised. In an interview Julian Mitchell, who wrote the screenplay, stated that the most important reason for the continuing interest in Wilde was the romance he had with Douglas. It is a view which panders to public prurience and entirely misunderstands the complicated and charismatic man who still fascinates today. "My Art," said Wilde in *De Profundis*, "was the real passion of my life; the love to which all other loves were as marsh-water to red wine." But of his art in this film, apart from the odd curtain call, there is sadly no evidence.

However, my main criticism was of the ending. The last scene was to have shown Oscar and Bosie falling into each other's arms in the railway station at Rouen — Oscar's wife, Constance, having died two scenes before. The reality, less neatly, was the reverse. On his release from



On the big screen: Oscar Wilde as played by Stephen Fry in the new film

prison Wilde went to France, where he spent four months near Dieppe writing *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. Tired of waiting for his wife and children to see him, in late August he gave in to Douglas's pleas for a reunion in Rouen and then went to spend the winter with him in Naples. The warmed-up affair was full of bitterness and argument and they separated for good after three months. As a final blow Constance died in April the following year.

The production team was adamant that their ending should stand; and it has. The imbalance in the homosexual-

ity I might have accepted, along with other tricks of the art, but this travesty of an ending I could not. A two-year consultancy contract had been proposed with a fee of £5,000. It was made clear that I was simply required to be on the end of a phone if needed. In the end it was the clause which prevented me from talking to any third party without permission which made me turn it down. Silence in matters like this has

no reasonable price. To be fair the film does not slaughter Wilde, but nor does it do him any favours. There is no sign of the man who wrote: "I altered the minds of men and the colours of things; there was nothing I said or did that did not make people wonder. I awoke the imagination of my century so that it created myth and legend around me." Those for whom this is a first introduction to Wilde will ask themselves whether they have been duped into thinking he is something extraordinary when all they can feel is pity for a man broken in prison. There are too many mis-

takes and omissions which weaken the story. One example will tell. When Oscar visits Constance's grave, the camera moves down the headstone revealing "Constance — Mary Lloyd — Wife of Oscar Wilde". The second half of the inscription was only placed there in 1963. Without it, and with Stephen Fry (playing Wilde) reading from the letter that he wrote at the time — "It was very tragic seeing her name carved on a tomb — her surname, my name not mentioned of course" — the scene would have had an almost unbearable poignancy.

As we go into a new century the public must reassess Wilde's greatness or it may begin to suspect that what lies behind the mask is mere emptiness. Films like this will not help. One must also ask why the Arts Council invested £1.5 million of lottery money in a film which claimed in its application for a grant to be based on Ellmann's biography, a pedigree which is patently not the case.

For my own part I should not have served my grandfather better by taking the money and attempting to change things from the inside. But those who buy silence rather than speech are seldom inclined to listen.

● The *Wilde Album* is published next Thursday by Fourth Estate (£12.99). *Wilde* opens next Friday

CONCERTS: Dark and light shades of Schumann; plus a masterly recital

Songs of life Listen and learn

IF John Eliot Gardiner's *Schumann Revealed* series meant to reinstate the composer as a creator of large-scale orchestral and choral scores, then *Manfred* made a fitting opening to the final night. With its obsessive repeated rhythmic figures over a tautly constructed span, it physically wrestles with Byron's demons. Standing strings, as in the Leipzig of the 1840s, gave an incisive narrative. But for all their beauty, what would Schumann have thought of the performance of selected incidental pieces that followed, divorced from their dramatic context? And would Byron have balked at the choir's consoling *Requiem* chant for the soul of his turbulent *Manfred*?

Spiritual consolation became the theme for this valditory evening. Schumann's neglected *Requiem* for *Mignon* emerged afresh in this touching performance as a masterpiece, free of the sentimentality inherent in its words. The Hanover Boys Choir was terrifically articulate, giving its pure but never

large sound the definition of speech.

Baritone William Dazeley, who made an arresting appeal to the boys to "return to life" in *Mignon*, came into his own in Goethe's *Faust* as Dr. Marius. His slow delivery gave his triumphal vision a deeply personal quality. Ruth Ziesak, Nadja Michael, Toby Spence and Neil Davies brought a rich, unusual combination of voices to the performance. As the work lifts higher into its spiritual stratosphere, Gardiner maintained a sense of lively interplay aided by the responsive Monteverdi Singers and the Barican's hard acoustics.

Could the neglect of Schumann's later works be due to the nature of their poetry? We identify more readily with his struggle with dark forces than with the songs of a redemption he never experienced.

HELEN WALLACE

THE books were piled up outside for the signing, for this was a rare London visit by the great American pianist, writer and linguist Charles Rosen, whose *The Classical Style* and *The Romantic Generation* have done as much as anything published this century to influence how we think about music and perform it.

This was both the concert of the books and a joyful seventieth birthday celebration. Rosen strode on to the platform and, after a summary survey of his audience, began to play Mozart. Here, in three little pieces composed in the Baroque style, and in the *A minor Rondo*, K511, we heard a penetrating study of musical etymology and linguistics in which the logic and the purpose of every note, inflection and phrase became suddenly and wonderfully obvious.

But this was not the dry explanation of academe. This was music-making fired by the passion of learning. Beethoven's *Sonata in A flat*, Op. 110, stood alone, assured and entire of itself, yet forged from the language we had just

begun to assimilate and searching far beyond it in the recitative, arsis and final, transfiguring, fugue. Detail after detail caught the breath: the bright energy coiled into a trill, the harmonic pointers of notes an octave apart; the perfect timing with which the rough, stomping Scherzo held its breath and tuned its spirit into tentative song.

After the interval we heard the rapidly beating heart of that Romantic Generation in Schumann's *Davidbinderlärne*. Simplicity, tough play and biting wit rang out of Rosen's mastery control of weight, measure and velocity. There were two simple errors: the Intermezzo from Schumann's *Faschingschwank aus Wien* and a Chopin Mazurka which, Rosen said, Liszt thought would have been rather better as a Nocturne.

HILARY FINCH



TEN OBJECTS OF DESIRE

Richard Cork's daily guide to the Hayward Gallery's new still lifes

■ JOAN MIRO: *Table with Glove*, 1921

TIPPED up at a drastic angle for our inspection, Miro's table-top seems in danger of collapse. But somehow, the objects lying on its surface defy gravity and remain in place. A portfolio spattered with red and green dots proclaims the presence of an artist. So does the fragment of *Le Journal*, surely paying homage to the newspaper cuttings in so many Cubist collages. The other objects, though, reflect Miro's love of his family's farm at Montroig in Spain. The well-used glove bristles with latent energy, while the walking-stick traversing the table in a dramatic diagonal has a tough, purposeful air. As for the tankard, it sports an heraldic image of a cock in full plumage, well able to disrupt the sleepiness of country life with his triumphant crowing.

□ *Objects of Desire*, sponsored by BMW in association with The Times, is at the Hayward Gallery (0171-960 4242)

ON MONDAY: Paul Klee's *Colourful Meal*, 1928

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LONDON JAZZ CONCERTS

Way they used to make them

A night of several firsts. This was the first time that Laurie Johnson's London Big Band had played the Palladium. Nor do I recall ever hearing any jazz orchestra perform the themes to *The New Avengers* and *The Professionals*. Those offbeat excursions arose from Johnson's impressive CV as a composer of screen music. *This is Your Life*, *Whicker's World* and *World in Action* have all borne his imprint.

Not content with sitting on his royalties, he launched his big band this year, with the aim of supplying London with a reservoir of talent similar to that to be found in its symphony orchestras.

A laudable goal, but the band's repertoire needs to be dusted down if it is to do justice to its imposing title. Eyebrows would be raised if the LSO never ventured further afield than Elgar, but the LBB seems to exist in a dance band time-warped, circa 1947.

Johnson learnt his trade in the distant age of Ted Heath

(the bandleader, not the Grocer) and this orchestra gives him the opportunity to return to that era. No one would expect him to sign up Courtney Pine, but it would have been good to have heard a pop tune a little more contemporary than *Got to Get You into My Life*.

Still, what the LBB does play, it plays extremely well, with all the precision you would expect from such experienced players, and a conductor as seasoned as Jack Parnell. Kenny Baker added lush trumpet to *Embraceable You*; Tommy Whittle took the honours on a mellifluous reading of *I'll Follow My Secret Heart*. One of the few representatives of the younger generation in the line-up, Ralph Salmins furnished ample propulsion from behind the drum-kit. Johnson has also unearthed a promising vocalist in 22-year-old Alexia, who was making only her second professional outing.

CLIVE DAVIS

Old bonds retied

ALTHOUGH the influence of South African exiles such as the pianist Chris McGregor and the Blue Notes on the 1960s British jazz scene is well documented, contact between the two countries' contemporary scenes is only just beginning. Keith Tippett numbers himself among those whose early jazz sensibilities were shaped by South African players, so it is fitting that he should be at the heart of current efforts to revive the extraordinary spirit that characterised relations 30 years ago.

Zim Ngawana led a 100-piece percussion ensemble at Nelson Mandela's presidential inauguration. But it was his sextet *Ingoma*, comprising three compatriots — pianist Andile Yemana, bassist Herbie Tsoeli and drummer Kevin Gibson, plus American trombonist Barry Olsen and trumpeter Jim Dvorak — that performed the short set that opened Wednesday's concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Beginning with a luxuriant-

ly slow, sweet flute melody, but swiftly incorporating many other musical elements into a deliciously heady, rousing brew, *Ingoma* demonstrated just how rich is the musical tradition upon which they are able to draw.

The freely improvising quartet Mujiciana — pianist Tippett, saxophonist Paul Dunnall, bassist Paul Rogers and drummer Tony Levin — brought the concert's first part to a close with their uniquely virtuosic brand of alternately meditative and rambunctious spontaneous composition.

The concert's second half saw all ten musicians on stage to celebrate their joint legacy. Rhythms ranged from rollicking to gently loping; wozy, almost Mingusian bluesiness alternated with rowdy free-for-alls. Anthemic, lush elegance was tellingly contrasted with bustling energetic romps, sonorous horn arrangements with scabbling free improvisation.

CHRIS PARKER



Soon Caroline, Andrea, Sharon and Jim Corr will release their second album. And if you don't rush out and buy it, then they haven't been meeting and greeting hard enough

Soldiering in the name of the Corrs

Ireland's latest tip for the top are going on a global charm offensive.

Alan Jackson willingly surrenders

I f the Irish sisters-and-brother group the Corrs entertained any illusions about chart success just happening, they were disabused of them during a recent three-month spell supporting Celine Dion on tour in Europe and America. "It was quite amazing to watch her," admits Andrea, lead vocalist and occasional tin whistler. "She'd run around on stage for the best part of two hours, then change clothes very quickly and get back out to sign autographs and pose for photographs, really giving her everything to the endless meet'n'greet ritual. And she'd be completely lovely about it too. Nothing false at all."

Dion, the ultimate super-pro, is a good role model for the Corrs at this stage in their

career. For, although you would never accuse the four twentysomethings of having been complacent prior to working with her, there was certainly an unusually high degree of serendipity involved in their own launch as a recording act. Who could blame them if they thought things unfolded so smoothly for every aspirant star?

Raised in Dundalk, County Louth, by parents who had day jobs and played in bands each weekend, their musical talents were encouraged from an early age. A first break came in 1990 via a chance meeting with John Hughes, at the time acting as musical advisor to film director Alan Parker, in Dublin to cast and

shoot *The Commitments*. A small role for Andrea resulted, and has since been followed by an appearance in Parker's *Evita*, in which she played the young mistress of Jonathan Pryce's Juan Peron. Hughes also volunteered himself as their manager, and thus began the process of refining and shaping their appeal as a potential recording act. It was while performing at a Dublin club in 1994 that Andrea and her co-vocalists, sisters Caroline (drums,

bodhran) and Sharon (violin) and brother Jim (keyboards and guitar) impressed the then American ambassador to Ireland, Jean Kennedy Smith. She invited them to appear at a World Cup celebration in Boston later that year and, while across the Atlantic, Hughes and the group shopped for a label deal. Meetings in Los Angeles came to nothing, but in New York a senior executive with Atlantic Records, Jason Lorn, was sufficiently impressed to

want to sign them to the independent company, Lava, that he was setting up. David Foster, record producer to the glitterati (Dion, Streisand and Michael Jackson among them) and a friend of Lorn's, was similarly taken. He too was launching his own label, 143. The result? The Corrs' debut album, 1995's *Forgiven, Not Forgotten*, was produced by Foster, released on Lava/143, and distributed by Atlantic. Oh, and it sold a cool two million copies.

That last fact will be unsurprising to anyone who has seen the Corrs play live. At heart they are that unfashionable but perennially marketable commodity, a melodic pop-rock band. Lush vocals sweeten the mix; the clever, restrained use of traditional Irish instrumentation subverts it. Major stars already in Australia, Japan and, of course, Ireland, they have all the elements necessary now to repeat that success in Britain and America, where sales of the LP were respectable but undramatic. A new single, *Only When I Sleep*, taken from *Forgiven's* forthcoming successor, *Talk On Corners*, could well be the catalyst they need.

It has a harder edge than anything they have released to date. "Touring so much changed us, but in an organic way," says Sharon of this metamorphosis. "We learnt to

express ourselves differently, while keeping the hallmarks of our sound — the big vocals, the traditional instrumentation — in place."

"We became more guitar-orientated, and hence hipper and more contemporary," Jim says. "Yes, we were afraid of being labelled middle-of-the-road, and I'm sure that the fact of our having taken this direction is going to be a big help."

Being signed to an American label brings with it potential access to a host of top-flight co-writers, and the Corrs have been quick to take advantage. *Talk On Corners* features collaborations with Glen Ballard, Alanis Morissette's composing partner, while *Only When I Sleep* was written with Oliver Leiber, son of the legendary Jerry (all those early Elvis hits, for a start). It comes complete with a video directed by Oasis favourite Nigel Dick that makes shameless capital of the quartet's good looks and willingness to mug for the camera. All in all, a very winning package: what could possibly go wrong?

But you don't tour with the mighty Celine and learn nothing. The Corrs are taking absolutely no chances, and when they have finished shaking every media hand in Britain they will set off to do the same throughout Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and then America. There will be more live dates too.

All in all, it means a lot of meet'n'greet, a lot of smiling, but "we're having fun", they insist, in between fretting that their London hotel's air-conditioning is about to induce collective flu and wondering why their room service lunch hasn't turned up.

Only When I Sleep is available on Lava/143. *Talk On Corners* will be released on Oct 20

STEPHEN DALTON

Rather worn under the cult

LIVE POP

FOR most of the 1980s, Liverpool's Echo and the Bunnymen were one of Britain's best-loved cult bands. Singer Ian McCulloch was a winning mix of art school attitude and football terrace bravado, and always boasted the coolest haircut in rock. But the quartet never achieved the success of their similar-sounding contemporaries U2, and eventually disintegrated a decade ago.

Older and wiser, the three surviving Bunnymen reformed this year with an acclaimed new album, *Evergreen*. Their pristine, guitar-driven sound is largely intact and their reception has been warm. Initial comeback shows three months ago were hailed as almost messianic second comings.

Even so, the Bunnymen seemed slightly overwhelmed by the cavernous dimensions of the Manchester Academy. McCulloch might present

himself in interviews as the most prodigiously gifted rock star ever to grace the stage, but he appeared tired and nervous for much of the set. Indeed, he admitted to feeling exhausted halfway through, which perhaps explains why his vocals on new compositions such as *Forgiven* and *I'll Fly Tonight* sounded jarringly flat.

In fairness, McCulloch remains a naturally charismatic front man and his voice has clearly matured. This was evident on rapturously received greatest hits including *The Killing Moon* and *The Back of Love*, both of which were crooned in a rich, fruity baritone. These more spartan numbers also gave free rein to guitarist Will Sergeant, whose crystalline playing technique is still recognisable as a warmer and more melodic variant

of the sparkling style made famous by U2's Edge.

But despite these highlights the set was uneven and lacklustre in parts. Archive tunes *Do It Clean* and *Lips Like Sugar*, once taut and nimble, were delivered with a bombastic clumsiness ill-suited to the band's poised elegance. More than ever, this show proved the Bunnymen to be an enduring cult outfit with ideas above their station.

STEPHEN DALTON

● Cailín Moran is away. Her column resumes next week

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HMV

steaming ahead

Little Ship, recorded in New York, is Loudon's sixteenth album and is considered to be his best yet. It was produced by Loudon himself along with Grammy Award winning producer John Leventhal, who plays a wide range of instruments on the album. Also featuring Shawn Colvin, who provides backing vocals on *Mr. Ambivalent* and *Our Own War*.

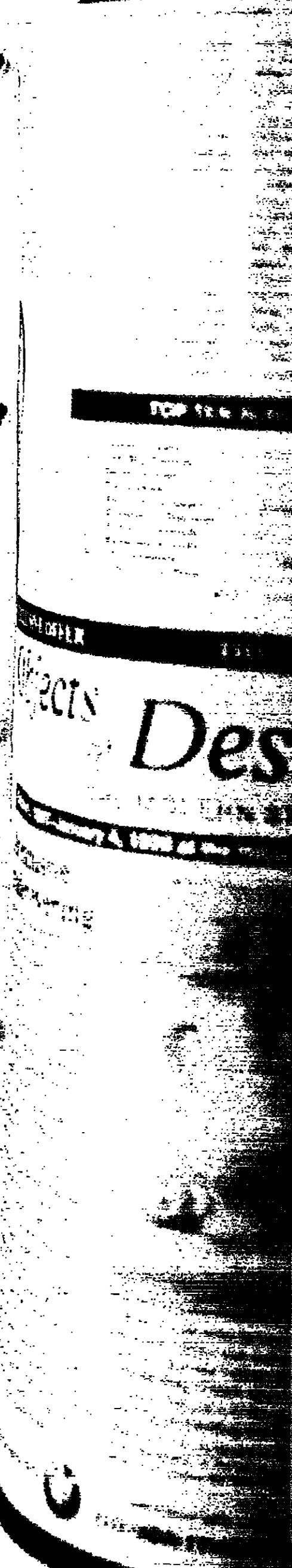
See Loudon live in October:

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24/25 London - Union Chapel	31 Coventry - Warwick Arts Centre
26 Oxford - Playhouse	

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NEW ALBUMS: David Sinclair defends M People's right to produce ace pop and not be sneered at

Listen without prejudice

M PEOPLE

Fresco (BMG 74321 52490 £14.49)

ALL sorts of people seem to have it in for M People. The indie-rock crowd has never forgiven them for snatching the 1994 Mercury Music Prize from under the noses of Pulp, Blur and Prodigy. Soul purists invariably balk at Heather Small's voice. And snobs from all areas routinely deride the group's music as being emblematic of the Sierra-driving, Harvester restaurant crowd, a burden M People seem to have inherited from Level 42.

Ignore these ungenerous critiques. Suspend any lingering prejudices you may harbour about "disco" music. And let the simple, unaffected charm of *Fresco* enter your heart.

While her deep, stylised delivery does tend to sound as if she has a small animal caught in the back of her throat, Small nevertheless has a wonderfully distinctive voice and a sure touch for conveying the essence of lyrics in which there is no place for irony, ambiguity or world-weary cynicism.

While slower, more soulful songs tend to predominate, the best tracks — *Fantasy Island* and *Angel St* — combine a feel-good disco beat with winning choruses harnessed to resolutely aspirational lyrics: "The children are playing in air you can breathe/People got dreams, people achieve."

Only once do they strike a false note, with a version of the old Bryan Ferry song, *Avon*, set to a polite drum and bass track which sounds rather contrived. Otherwise, like the Spice Girls, M People provide highly enjoyable, top-quality pop which thrives on its utter lack of artifice and pretension.



Suspend any lingering antipathy you may harbour towards "disco" music, and let the simple, unaffected charm of M People's *Fresco* enter your heart

SLEEPER

Pleased to Meet You

(Indolent/BMG SLEEPD016 £13.99)

ALTHOUGH on to their third album, SLEEPER still sound rather undecided as to what their proper role in this pop game should be. Now almost entirely a vehicle for the words, tunes and thoughts of singer Louise Wener, they seem torn between retaining their slightly leftfield indie-band cachet and promoting Wener to full-on pop personality status.

The result is too many songs like the single *She's a Good Girl*, whose awkward yet banal tune and incomprehensible lyric — "She's a good girl/An alien make-up on a green skin/Holding her breath in/Maybe she's melting" — resulted in a predictably disappointing chart performance. *Rollercoaster*, *Please Please Please*, *Superclean* (which sounds like an old Elastica song) and *Roméo* (the next single) all suffer from a similarly lightweight, yet needlessly cluttered approach.

Better by far are the songs where Wener adopts a more straightforward approach,

particularly *Miss You*, which sounds a bit like Nino singing with the Velvet Underground, and *Breathe*, in which Wener's voice drifts along in sympathy with the tune instead of snatching at it. With SLEEPER's novelty value fading fast, Wener would do well to explore this avenue more thoroughly in future.

ERIC BIBB

Me to You

(Code Blue 3984 20444 £15.49)

BORN in America, but resident for many years in Sweden, Eric Bibb has been lumped in with the new breed of acoustic country-blues artists who have cast themselves in the image of roots-meister

Taj Mahal. The connection is reinforced on *Me to You*, Bibb's third album, thanks to a guest vocal by Mahal himself on *Sing Your Song*, a typically warm, relaxed tune, written by Bibb, with a gospel-like chorus that sounds as if you have known it all your life. Although rooted in the blues, this album is a wide-ranging affair which incorporates touches of soul — as on the Robert Cray-esque *Between A Woman and a Man* — and several ballads, such as *You're the One* and *Something Much Greater*, which could almost pass for mainstream black American pop.

Only once does Bibb tackle a full-blooded blues, a sub-

lime, whip-taut shuffle called *I Need A Vacation*: "I'm gonna take a long vacation, I'm all tucked out/I got a cabin in the country, don't nobody know about." It is the best track on the album and, while admiring Bibb's determination to steer clear of the blues ghetto, one hopes he has not drifted too far from the core of his art.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

A Life Less Ordinary

(A&M 5408274 £13.99)

MORE than merely the soundtrack of the forthcoming Danny Boyle movie, the album *A Life Less Ordinary* is an extraordinarily vivid snapshot of the rich yet dislocated musical landscape that is 1990s alternative pop.

Boasting new songs from Beck (a provocative samba-type number, *Dead Weight*), Ash (the title track, which is also their new single), R.E.M. (an eerie, bad dream piece called *Leave*), Faithless, Underworld, Sneaker Pimps and others, it also includes a smattering of easy listening standards such as Elvis Presley's *Always on My Mind* and Bobby Darin's *Beyond The Sea*, alongside an old Prodigy track (*Full Throttle*), and some more modish bits and pieces. It is like tuning into XFM radio while travelling in a time capsule.

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

JAZZ ALBUMS

Team player is man of the match

GEOFF KEEZER

Turn up the Quiet

(Columbia 488830 2)

THE American pianist Geoff Keezer is only in his mid-twenties, but already has a stint in jazz's most celebrated finishing school, Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, behind him, in addition to a string of well-received albums as a leader.

This one features him in three basic settings: solo, jamming with like-minded contemporaries (saxophonist Joshua Redman and bassist Christian McBride), and fronting multi-textured arrangements of both his own pieces and odd ones by the likes of Japanese composer Ryuichi Sakamoto.

Singer Diana Krall brings smoky intimacy to her various contributions, and both percussionist Cyro Baptista and programmer Jason Miles are intelligently used, but it is Keezer who shines, whether he's playing his trademark quirky, splashily percussive piano on familiar material such as *Stompin' at the Savoy*, exploring the emotional depths of Billy Strayhorn's precocious classic *Lush Life*,

or combining elegantly with Redman's tart, sinuous soprano.

TONY REMY

Metamorphosis

(Alltone/New Note ALTR 001)

GUJARIST Tony Remy has spent the 1990s slowly consolidating the support he attracted in the 1980s through his exciting work with the likes of flautist Phillip Bent and Desperately Seeking Fusion.

This self-produced album is singular in concept, personnel and overall sound to his debut GRP recording *Boof*, balancing slinky soul and rap vocal tracks with both heavy and light funk instrumentals and the odd acoustic piece.

The results only hint at Remy's visceral live impact, but his soloing is at once vibrant and tasteful, and his use of the vocoder brings welcome textural variety to an album which, while it might have benefited from a less rigidly funk-based approach, will undoubtedly delight his many fans.

CHRIS PARKER

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- (1) Urban Hymns.....Verve (Hut)
- (2) The Big Picture.....Elton John (Rocket)
- (3) Be Here Now.....Oasis (Creation)
- (4) Portishead.....Portishead (Gut Beat)
- (5) Marchin' Already.....Ocean Colour Scene (MCA)
- (6) Bridges to Babylon.....Rolling Stones (Virgin)
- (7) White on Blonde.....Texas (Mercury)
- (8) Mervin & Strike.....Finley Quaye (Epic)
- (9) OK Computer.....Radiohead (Parlophone)
- (10) Time out of Mind.....Bob Dylan (Columbia)

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Figures in brackets denote last week's position

EXCLUSIVE OFFER

THE TIMES

Objects of Desire

THE MODERN STILL LIFE

October 9, 1997-January 4, 1998 at the Hayward Gallery

An exclusive reader evening

Readers of *The Times* are invited to an exclusive private view of the first comprehensive exhibition to celebrate and explore the 20th-century still life.

The evening on November 6, 1997, from 6.30-8.30pm, includes a guided tour of the exhibition and an informal reception with wine in the Hayward Gallery on the South Bank, London.

The exhibition, created by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, brings together over 160 modern masterpieces from collections worldwide. Highlights include Marcel Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel*, Man Ray's spike-covered iron, *Gift*, Matisse's *Goldfish and Palette*, Meret Oppenheim's fur-covered teacup and saucer, *Object*, a white lobster telephone by Salvador Dalí, René Magritte's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Jasper Johns's *Flag*, and *Brillo Boxes* by Andy Warhol.

From Cézanne to Koons, this exhibition explores the ways in which exceptional artists and exceptional works have transformed the vision and meaning of the still life in the modern age.



Tickets: £12 (includes entrance to the exhibition, guided tour and drinks). Call the Hayward Gallery box office on 0171-960 4242. (Tickets must be purchased in advance. There is a £1 charge for telephone bookings for handling and postage.) *Objects of Desire: the Modern Still Life* is organised under the auspices of The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

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CHANGING TIMES

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THE TIMES FRIDAY OCTOBER 10 1997

Queen's Bench Divisional Court

Adult prison policy unlawful

Regina v Accrington Youth Court and Others, Ex parte Flood
Before Mr Justice Sedley and Mr Justice Auld
[Judgment August 22]

The Home Secretary acted unlawfully in 1988 in issuing instructions that allowed young offenders to be held routinely in adult prisons for allocation purposes following sentence. The secretary of state had no power to detain young offenders in adult prisons as a matter of general practice. The instructions violated the principle of section 10(2) of the Criminal Justice Act 1962, as amended, and were in excess of the secretary of state's powers under section 10(2).

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held quashing a warrant of commitment to Risley Prison in respect of the applicant, Louise Flood, and prohibiting the issue of a warrant for her arrest by Accrington Justices, but refusing a writ of habeas corpus and indicating the terms in which a fresh commitment warrant could be issued.

Section 10 of the 1962 Act, as amended by the Criminal Justice Act 1968, provides:

(1) Subject to section 22(2)(b) of the Prison Act 1952 (removal to hospital, etc.), an offender sentenced to detention in a young offender institution or to custody for life shall be detained in a young offender institution unless a direction under this section is in force in relation to him.

(2) The Secretary of State may from time to time direct that an offender sentenced to detention in a young offender institution or to custody for life shall be detained in a prison or remand centre instead of a young offender institution, but if he is under 18 at the time of the direction, only for a temporary purpose.

Mr Ian Wise for the applicant, Mr Robert Tam for the governor of Risley Prison and the Home Secretary, the justices did not appear and were not represented.

MR JUSTICE SEDLEY said the applicant was 16 and had been sentenced by the Accrington Youth Court to eight months detention for a number of offences. She had been taken from the court to Risley Prison on the day of sentence.

The original commitment warrant had been on its face but a fresh warrant had been issued backdated to July 29 in the following terms:

"You the constables of the Lancashire police force are hereby required to convey the accused to Risley remand centre and there deliver the accused to the governor thereof, together with this warrant; and you, the governor, to receive

into your custody and keep the accused for the said period."

As Mr Tam had accepted, the fresh warrant was bad because of its direction to the Risley governor to keep the young offender in his custody for the full eight months of her sentence. But Mr Wise had submitted that remand to Risley, even temporarily, was unlawful because it was dictated by an unlawful policy of the Home Secretary.

In the background was a serious concern about conditions in adult prisons such as Risley and their effect on young offenders placed there. There was no allocation centre for females in the prison system which was designated as a young offender institution. There was no female young offender institution as such in the country.

There were five women's prisons parts of which had been designated young offender institutions, and it was to those that girls aged from 15 to 17 were or should be allocated. There had been a sharp rise since 1992 in the number of female young offenders in custody.

The Home Secretary had by letter of December 12, 1988, directed to governors of female establishments, the power to decide in specified circumstances that a young offender should be held in prison rather than in a young offender institution. One of the criteria provided that "sentenced young offenders may be held in a remand centre for allocation purposes".

Since there was nowhere else in the prison system where allocation of young offenders could take place, there was absolutely no choice in the matter so that no discretion whatever was being delegated to the secretary of state's officers. Was that lawful?

In their Lordships' judgment, the terms of section 10 made it plain that it was not. The secretary of state's power, and therefore that of his designated officers, to depart from the provisions for allocation to a young offender institution was limited to permission "from time to time [to] direct that an offender... shall be detained in a prison or remand centre... for a temporary purpose" if under 18.

That phraseology made it plain that Parliament was authorising the secretary of state on occasion to place a particular offender under the age of 18 temporarily in a prison or remand centre.

It did not authorise him to make it a general practice to do so. It did not authorise him to give such a direction in relation to offenders generally, and it did not authorise him to keep them in a prison or a remand centre for however long it took, possibly the whole length of the sentence, to make a lawful placement in a young offender institution.

The practice not only permitted but enjoined by the secretary of state was a violation of the principle contained in section 10(2) of the 1962 Act, as amended, and an excess of the powers contained in subsection (2) of that enactment.

Their Lordships recognised the problems that conclusion created for the prison service. But it had to be recognised that the very change which the amendment of the 1962 Act brought about was spelled out in the 1988 letter, which then went on to lay down a regime which meant that there would in practice be no change.

MR JUSTICE ASTILL, agreeing, said the policy of the secretary of state was to send all female young offenders sentenced to detention in a young offender institution first to prison.

There could not properly be said to be a discrete decision made about each young female offender. That was a blanket policy. It was contrary to section 10(2) of the 1962 Act and it was accordingly unlawful.

The court's decision would give effect to the purpose of the legislation which was to protect often vulnerable young offenders from the possibility of malign influences.

Solicitors: Clyde Chappell Betham, Tunstall; Treasury Solicitor.

Regina v Warwickshire County Council, Ex parte Powergen plc
Before Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Mummery
[Judgment July 31]

Where a developer had been refused planning permission for the development of a supermarket because the highway authority, on being consulted by the local planning authority, had considered that the proposed highway works for suitable access to the site would be detrimental to highway safety, and the developer, on appeal to the Secretary of State for the Environment, was granted planning permission on condition that specified highway works were carried out, the highway authority had no option but to co-operate in implementing the planning permission by entering into an agreement with the developer pursuant to section 278 of the Highways Act 1980.

The Court of Appeal so stated dismissing an appeal by the highway authority, Warwickshire County Council, from the decision of Mr Justice Forbes dated November 21, 1996 whereby he allowed an application by Powergen plc for judicial review of the highway authority's refusal to enter into a section 278 agreement.

In 1994 Powergen applied to Warwick District Council for outline planning permission to develop their site. The proposed development was for a supermarket, parking for 500 cars, petrol filling station and suitable means of access to the site. The proposed access and highway works were fully detailed and illustrated with drawings which accompanied the application.

The district council, as required, consulted the county council, as local highway authority, about the proposed highway works. The district council refused the application for a number of reasons, one of which was that the proposed highway works would be detrimental to highway safety.

Powergen's appeal to the secretary of state was successful and they were granted planning permission subject to a number of conditions. To satisfy condition 8 Powergen needed the highway authority to carry out specified highway works which, for practical purposes, also required Powergen to enter into a section 278 agreement with the highway authority. The latter refused on the ground that the proposed access arrangements were still unsafe.

Section 278 of the 1980 Act provides:

"(1) A highway authority may, if they are satisfied that it will be of benefit to the public, enter into an agreement with any person - (a) for the execution by the authority of any works which the authority are or may be authorised to execute... on terms that the person pays the whole or such part of the cost of the works... in accordance with the agreement."

Mr Michael Supperstone, QC, for the highway authority; Mr William Hicks, QC and Mr Russell Harris for Powergen.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that he had reached the clear conclusion that the judge had come to the right conclusion: that following a successful appeal by the developer the relevant highway authority had no option but to co-operate in implementing the planning permission by entering into a section 278 agreement.

His Lordship saw the appeal as raising a simple question: was it reasonable for a highway authority, whose road safety objections had been fully heard and rejected on appeal, then, quite inconsistently with the planning inspector's independent judgment on the issue, nevertheless to maintain its own original view?

To his Lordship's mind there could be but one answer to that question: a categorical "No". That answer was arrived at, less by reference to any general question regarding the proper relationship between planning authorities and highway authorities on road safety issues, than in the light of the following basic considerations:

1 The site access and associated highway works, together with the road safety problems they raised were (a) central, indeed critical, to the planning application, and (b) considered in full detail rather than left to be dealt with as reserved matters.

2 The planning permission had been granted following an appeal to the secretary of state and not merely by the local planning authority itself.

3 There were no new facts or changed circumstances whatsoever following the inspector's determination of the appeal.

For those reasons, his Lordship would reject Mr Supperstone's central argument that, even following the grant of planning permission on appeal, the highway authority retained an independent discretion to refuse to enter into the requisite section 278 agreement by which it must mean that they remained consistently entitled to adhere to and act on their original view that the public would not benefit from the development because of the highway dangers it would create.

His Lordship believed, on the contrary, that the inspector's conclusion on that issue, because of its independence and the process by which it was arrived at, necessarily became the only properly tenable view on the issue of road safety and thus was determinative of the public benefit.

His Lordship had not overlooked section 57 of the 1990 Act: the basic provision requiring that the development had planning permission.

Accepting, as his Lordship did, that the highway authority's approval of the development was still required before condition 8 could be satisfied, his Lordship's judgment was that such approval or consent could not properly be withheld.

Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Mummery agreed.

Solicitors: Mr David G. Carter, Warwick; Wragge & Co, Birmingham.

Entitlement to primary finding of misrepresentation

Moore v Intrepreneur Estates (GL) Ltd and Another
A person accused in the course of civil litigation of misrepresentation was entitled to a primary finding by the judge as to whether he had made the misrepresentation, whether he was fraudulent and why.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Mummery, Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Swinton Thomas) so stated on July 31 when dismissing an appeal by Mr Martin J. Moore from Mr Recorder Nicoll at

Central London County Court when he made findings of misrepresentation against Intrepreneur Estates (GL) Ltd on issues of liability but dismissed Mr Moore's claim on the ground that he should not in the circumstances have relied on the misrepresentation.

LORD JUSTICE HENRY said that when a person had been accused of misrepresentation, he or she was entitled to a primary finding as to whether he or she made that representation and whether he or she was fraudulent, and why. It was quite unsatisfactory to determine that question simply on whether the recipient of the representation was credible or not.

It was not satisfactory to reach any conclusion without transparently addressing all the evidence and giving reasons for all major findings of fact. That did not happen in the instant case and the recorder's finding that the representation was made to the plaintiff had to be reversed.

Psychologist's duty of care to child

Phelps v Hillingdon London Borough Council
Before Mr Justice Garland
[Judgment September 23]

An educational psychologist owed a duty of care, not only to the local authority employing her, but also to the child being assessed, through her parents, on the basis that they would act upon her findings, recommendations and advice.

Accordingly, where the psychologist's failure to diagnose dyslexia amounted to a failure to exercise the degree and skill expected of an ordinarily competent member of the profession, the local authority was vicariously liable for that negligence.

Mr Justice Garland so held in the Queen's Bench Division when allowing a claim for damages by the plaintiff, Pamela Helen Phelps, against the defendants, Hillingdon London Borough Council for their alleged negligence at common law in failing to identify her as having a special learning difficulty or dyslexia and failing to take appropriate remedial steps.

Miss Cherie Booth, QC and Mr John Greenbourne for the plaintiff; Mr Edward Faulks, QC and Mr Andrew Warnock for the council.

MR JUSTICE GARLAND said that the plaintiff, who had a long history of poor performance at various schools, was referred aged 12 in 1985 by the school she was then attending to Miss Diana Mellor, an educational psychologist employed by the defendant.

Miss Mellor reported that, although the plaintiff's verbal skills were below average, she had no specific weaknesses, that she did not need to be in a special school and that there was an emotional basis to her difficulties.

Over the next three years the plaintiff made little or no progress despite remedial teaching provided by the school and she left unable to write down a telephone number correctly or record a simple message. At no time was there any diagnosis of a specific learning difficulty despite the fact that dyslexia was already a well recognised condition.

Further assessments between 1980 and 1996 found her to be severely dyslexic and it was accepted that, from the nature of her disability, she would have been dyslexic at the age of 12.

His Lordship said that X (Miss Phelps) v Hillingdon London Borough Council (1995) 2 AC 633 had established that local authorities could be vicariously liable for breaches of the common law duty of care owed by educational psychologists and teachers to a child, through its parents, to whom they gave advice; likewise, a school could owe a common law duty of care to an under-performing pupil. Bolam v Friern Hospital Management Committee (1957) 1 WLR 582 defined the standard of care as that of the ordinary skill of a competent psychologist.

Here, confronted with both the great discrepancy between the chronological and predicted reading ages and the unusual difficulty in writing, the educational

psychologist made more than an error of judgment in ascribing the error to the emotional difficulties noted earlier; she failed to exercise the degree of care and skill to be expected of an ordinarily competent member of her profession.

Given the failure to diagnose the plaintiff's dyslexia, the school was not at fault in the form of the remedial teaching it provided for the plaintiff, judged by the standards of the time. However, the local authority, as the employer, was vicariously liable for the negligent advice given by the educational psychologist.

On the facts, it was clear that the adverse consequences of the plaintiff's dyslexia could have been mitigated by early diagnosis and appropriate treatment. She had responded and was likely to continue to respond to the appropriate support she was now receiving and, as the damage was not too remote, was entitled to recover damages.

Solicitors: Teacher Stern Selby; Vizards.

Judge must still give warning

Regina v McQuiston
Where after evidence was heard a judge exercised his discretion that a video recording of a complainant's evidence should not be replayed and he read substantially from the transcript of that recording instead, he should still warn the jury not to give the complainant's evidence disproportionate weight simply because it was repeated well after other evidence and to bear in mind the other evidence in the case.

In particular, it was still incumbent upon the judge to remind the jury of the complainant's cross-examination and re-examination from his notes, and where appropriate, any relevant part of the defendant's own evidence.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division (Lord Justice Otton, Mr Justice Beldford and Judge Beaumont, QC) so held in a reserved judgment on July 9 when giving reasons for allowing the appeal against conviction of two counts of

indecent assault on a male, of James Wallace McQuiston. He was jailed for nine months.

LORD JUSTICE OTTON applied R v Rawlings (1995) 2 Cr App R 222. In the instant case, however, after the jury had retired, it raised questions which the judge decided could be dealt with not by replaying the video recording of the complainant's evidence, as was the case in Rawlings, but by reading reasons for allowing the appeal against conviction of two counts of

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EDUCATION



Schoolchildren in York Minster as part of a scheme to tell them about the diocese. Religious education is rooted in local communities

The carrier of new hopes

Religious education is a Utopian whisper that can help to make Britain a moral leader, says John M. Hull

For too long, religious education in this country has hidden its light under a bushel. Critics who claim that the RE syllabus is a confusing mish-mash of conflicting beliefs have been allowed to colour parents' and politicians' views of what is really going on in the classroom.

The creation of a truly non-sectarian publicly funded religious education for all children is one of British education's greatest achievements. There can be no greater demonstration of the need for us to promote this subject as a vehicle for greater tolerance and understanding than Lord Tebbit's declaration this week that "multiculturalism is a divisive force".

In this, the first week-long National RE Festival, more than a half of the country's schools have run events to explain and celebrate with parents this most multicultural of subjects, a subject that has four significant features in this country.

First, RE is non-sectarian, non-denominational. Even in Germany, where it flourishes, it remains primarily confessional or denominational in its management, and Roman Catholics and Protestants have not managed to agree on an integrated curriculum. In contrast, Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland have been able to agree on a new, integrated RE curriculum.

In England and Wales the law requires that the teaching and practices of the principal religions, including Christianity, be taught. The non-sectarian character of the enterprise means that though Christianity and other religions are to be taught, no attempt is to be

made to proselytise the cause of one religion over another.

Secondly, RE in England and Wales is rooted in the local community. The agreed syllabus conferences and the local standing advisory councils on religious education, which every local education authority must, by law, have, constitute a unique forum for the discussion and collaboration about the curriculum by parents acting through elected councillors, the teachers and the religious bodies.

Thirdly, RE is taught by the regular teachers to the normal classes. What influence does the Church have on the selection, training and appointment of RE teachers? None. RE is a completely secularised aspect of the teaching profession in this country.

While parents continue to have the right to withdraw their children, it is not the British practice to divide children into religious groups. If Muslims were taught Islam by Muslim teachers, Christians taught Christianity by Christians, and so on, it would not be long before taxpayers asked why this sectarian RE should be at the public expense. The

only defence for a publicly funded RE as part of the required curriculum is the fact that RE is for all. The Christian faith, like Islam, has educational gifts for all children.

Finally, the achievement of RE is that it is both critical and spiritual. In these respects, it represents part of the heritage of education of the European Enlightenment. It is critical that RE seeks to dispel ignorance and superstition and to expose religious belief to the light of rational discussion. It is spiritual in the sense that it is not content with merely factual description but seeks to make a lively and intelligible contribution to the moral and spiritual development of every child. Every subject has a contribution to moral and spiritual development, but there can be little doubt that RE is best equipped to be the flagship of this process.

For the future, we look to a time when every primary school will have a properly qualified RE co-ordinator on the staff and to when every secondary school will have theologically qualified staff, because about half of students

are taught by teachers with no special training in religious study. We look for a future in which schools will be more sensitive to the needs of the 450,000 Muslim students and to RE to make a significant contribution against the Islamophobia that is such a notable feature of attitudes in the West today.

W e look for a future in which Tony Blair's Government and David Blunkett's ministry recognise that RE has the overwhelming support of parents, and is ready to be the principal education ally of the intentions of the Government to re-establish Britain as a moral force in the world today.

RE is the Utopian whisper in the ear of the nation. It is Utopian because in RE, we see writ small the hope of a future in which the religions of the world will abandon their tragic history of competition.

Very significant in this respect is the Statement of Values for schools produced by the National Forum for Values in Education and the

Community, which was published in May.

If we examine the tempting letters sent out by banks urging us to take out yet more gold-plated credit cards and assuring us that an abundance of money will guide us throughout our lives, we are struck by the failure of these letters to include any reference to the moral and spiritual values listed in the national statement. Why should they? Because it is contradictory to invite schools to undertake the transmission of values which are ignored by the major institutions which shape the lives of adults and children.

RE remains a Utopian whisper because some liberal and educated members of the opinion-forming aristocracy have not yet recognised that it has emerged out of its instructional past to become the carrier of new hopes.

● The writer is Professor of Religious Education at the University of Birmingham.

Poor teachers need help, not the sack

Pupils may be the best judges of good teaching, says Anne Lee

the subject, dealing effectively with questions and showing enthusiasm for the subject. The time is right to see whether such methods could be useful in secondary schools.

Such questionnaires should have three facets: they need to ask the student to assess their own commitment to the subject; have some assessable objective questions; and have room for open-ended comments about

'It is not only results — pupils also tend to vote with their feet'

strengths and areas for improvement. An improvement programme could include coaching, opportunities for role-modelling, updating techniques and materials, and mentoring.

Where a whole department has gone to sleep, help for the head of department must come from outside the school. There are subject specialists available.

On-the-job coaching requires intense concentration, skill and empathy. Effective observation should be a motivating and enabling experience. There must always be recognition of good performance, and criticism must be followed by a problem-solving discussion.

The teacher who has been warned for poor performance will feel dreadful and this leads to what could be the most controversial, but the most essential, element in

a retraining package.

A mentor who can utilise a mixture of analysis, cognitive behavioural therapy and counselling can quickly provide astounding results. Local authorities used to employ mentors to help with the induction of newly qualified staff. With funding cuts this role disappeared, but in our increasingly competitive age collaboration is at risk. Staff management time is short and we need to put more personal support into the system.

They may work to rekindle motivation by recalling golden times from the past, suggest renegotiating a "contract" with a class, or give practical tips on how to reclaim the classroom as the teacher's territory. It may be necessary to spend time examining traumatic events.

Though mentoring may go on for months, it is possible within three consultations to see positive results. Teachers can step back into the classroom optimistic that they can recreate the joyful experiences they once had. Mentoring therapy is not a miracle cure — but sometimes it can seem like it.

A mentor can also be the private sounding board to help to identify whether a teacher's career has come to an end and to help the subject to find something new in life.

NONE OF this is a cheap cure, but it is cheaper than training teachers who leave the profession after two or three years, or coping with the results of pupils educated to the lowest level of their ability.

Where do we find these teacher-mentors? The TTA has plenty of ideas for "expert" grades, subject leaders and other "super-teachers". They are also currently recruiting them for students studying for the new Heads' Qualification. Training some teachers to become independent mentors could save many professional lives.

● The writer is a former head teacher.

Hugh Thompson on an unrevealing section of the Ucas form

More than 400,000 sixth-formers are grappling with their university application (Ucas) forms this term. No part of this vital document is agonised over more than the personal statement of why you want to take a particular degree course. But with students, their tutors and their parents all contributing to this statement, the results are usually conventional.

Typically they read: "I want to do your course because of my growing vocation/interest/realisation of its importance. My A-level studies confirm this interest as does my work experience. At school I am in the football/netball/debating/Scouting club. My outside interests also show that I am a well rounded person, bound to get on with both other students and the course." Each candidate writes around 500 words and this predictable glacier of words goes before the admissions tutors. Yet surely with so many applicants and so much riding on A-level results, many of these statements can be barely scanned. After all, no one is going to say: "I want to go to university because I hear it's a bloody good three-year party and I can't stand the thought of work." No one is going to say: "I haven't a clue what I want to do with my life but I thought I would do your course because it sounded fun, and anyway I heard the sex ratio was in my favour." But these unwritten reasons are very much why sixth-formers choose universities and their courses.

Proof of this pudding was the psychology admissions tutor who phoned up an applicant who, on his personal statement of why he wanted to do the course, wrote just one word "Because". The tutor said: "I must see you for an interview. It was the first original statement I had seen all week." Surely the response of someone going blind with the boredom of reading or at least looking at hundreds of bland, identical statements.

Every year Rob Young, of Leicester University's archaeology department, goes through 500 Ucas forms. From these he makes 150 place offers, one sixth of which he hopes will come. "The most

So, why do you really want to come here?

ACCORDING TO THIS, YOU CHOSE OUR COLLEGE FOR OUR LIBERAL ATTITUDE TO HEDONISM...



important criterion is A-level prediction — we require two Bs and a C — but with so many now coming to university we interview so few, so the statement is the only chance we have of getting some kind of personal feel for the student. Of course, many are written to a model formula but even so, something of the personality of the student does creep through.

Dr Young says: "Some are very badly written and some are well schooled. Of course, some are more interesting than others. Many students have travelled extensively, most read science fiction and so on. They may not be perfect but they are useful and at the end of the process

there are a few places we offer because of the statement in spite of the exam prediction. The worst part of the application we read is often that written by the school or college, which often shows a complete ignorance of the student."

Down the road at the university's engineering department, the admissions tutor Ian Jarvis says: "I always read them but they are only really important in borderline cases, or when we are offering a scholarship. A-level predictions are the most important criteria. I have never rejected a student because of a bad personal statement."

But in a very competitive subject like medicine, where "straight A" students can fail to get a place, the personal statement which shows something more than the textbook approach — hands-on work experience with the sick, imaginative and relevant use of a vacation — can easily swing the balance.

Alan Lumb, of Leeds University medical school, says: "We have heard a rumour that because of the importance of the personal statements for medical schools, there is an agency which will write them for £200. We are increasingly sceptical of who is actually writing these statements: certain schools have such a stylised homogenous formula that we tend to discount their pupils' statements. If we are suspicious and smell a rat, then we always have them for interview. With so many good students applying for so few places, these statements are vital as we increasingly view non-academic criteria as being important." Last year only one third of those applying for a medical school got a place and most had the required A levels.

One longstanding history lecturer said: "If you are going to interview the student, the statement is a vital platform, but when it comes to offering places the headmasters' remarks are far more useful. We have all become increasingly suspicious of these statements because we know that schools are tutoring their pupils in what to say. Increasingly, places are, and will be, decided on A-level results."

THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES

GOLF

Woosnam wisely leaves his clubs to do the talking

BY JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT

DETAILS

FIRST-ROUND RESULTS
 1 Woosnam (GB) bt J Parnevik (Swe) 4 and 3
 F Nobilo (NZ) bt P Mickelson (US) at 38th
 B Faxon (US) bt D Clarke (GB) 2 and 1
 V Singh (Fiji) bt T Watanabe (Japan) 4 and 3
TODAY'S QUARTER-FINAL DRAW
 (seeds in brackets)
 0945 and 1300: E Els (SA) (1) v Woosnam
 0900 and 1315: N Price (Zim) (4) v Nobilo
 0915 and 1330: C Montgomerie (GB) (3) v Faxon (8)
 0830 and 1345: S Elkington (Aus) (2) v Singh (7)

Woosnam was pleased to have won, pleased to have played so well on a windy day and pleased to have rediscovered his driving.

He was helped by some poor golf by Parnevik in the middle of the afternoon round. Between the 23rd and 29th holes, Parnevik often looked ill-at-ease. He fidgeted more than usual, took time over the ball. On the 23rd, he hit a simple chip from the edge of the green ten feet past the hole. On the 24th, he half-fluffed a chip, his swing looking like an uncertain amateur's, too long



Parnevik faltered

AFTER the belligerent way in which Ian Woosnam had talked about being left out of matches in the Ryder Cup, it was beholden upon him to put up or shut up in the first round of the Toyota World Match Play Championship at Wentworth yesterday. He did the former.

In an echo of his first-round performance in 1987, Woosnam went round in an approximate 66 in the morning against Jesper Parnevik, his Ryder Cup team-mate, to edge into a one-hole lead and then widened it to win on the 15th in the afternoon.

Woosnam was impressive — just as he had been in his first-round match ten years ago, when he was six under par in defeating Sam Randalph 4 and 3. This was a Woosnam that has not been seen much lately. His jaw jutted determinedly and he was obviously interested. His swing had much of that lazy rhythm that is noticeable when he is at his best and, with a funny-looking, green-shafted driver in his hand, he gave the ball a fearful chubbing from the tee. In the main, he hit it straight, too.

In profile, the driver, which he was using for the first time in competition, looks like a Ping putter. It is centre-shafted, designed that way in order to place the end of the shaft as near to the centre of gravity of the club as is legally possible. The aim, Woosnam explained, is to help amateurs hit the ball with draw, though few amateurs, if any, could swing with a shaft as stiff as Woosnam's, which is as stiff as can be.

There was a dubious privilege at stake for the winner of this match and that was the chance to play Ernie Els, the defending champion, who is unbeaten after nine matches in this event. Nonetheless,

and too loose, as if half-expecting that he would either thin the ball over the green or stub it. He stubbed it.

On the 26th, his drive started out far to the right before curling back into the semi-rough, then his second flew well left of the green. His brave and skilful chip hit the hole, but it did not matter when Woosnam, who had been in the middle of the fairway from the tee and had hit an authoritative second shot to ten feet, coaxed in the curling putt.

Brad Faxon did a little to erase the memories of a poor Ryder Cup when he defeated Darren Clarke 2 and 1 for the right to face Colin Montgomerie this morning. Faxon lost the 1st hole, squared the match on the 10th and was never again behind. "This won't get the Ryder Cup back to the United States," he said, "but it's nice to win any match here. These guys are good."

It may be heretical, politically incorrect or just plain rude to raise the following question, but is it essential for there to be a Japanese competitor in this event? Does the sponsorship depend on it? Would the future of this historic event be endangered if one were not?

The question is asked because of the lack of success of men from that country in this competition in recent years. The last Japanese competitor to win a match in this event was Naomichi Ozaki, known as Joe, who beat Ben Crenshaw in the first round in 1986. Tsukasa Watanabe maintained the tradition when losing 4 and 3 to Vijay Singh, who now plays Steve Elkington.

Frank Nobilo survived an afternoon fightback by Phil Mickelson before winning at the second extra hole to earn the right to face Nick Price today.



Woosnam, looking more his old self, follows his chip from a bunker on the 15th in the morning round

CYCLING: INJURED BRITON ECLIPSED BY JALABERT AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Boardman content to take bronze

FROM JEREMY WHITTLE IN SAN SEBASTIAN

CHRIS BOARDMAN overcame a cracked rib to claim the time-trial bronze medal at the world championships here yesterday as Laurent Jalabert confounded all expectations to take the title with only the second victory in the discipline in his long professional career.

"A bronze medal is really only a consolation prize," Boardman, who sustained the injury two weeks ago while making his young son's bunk bed, said, "but, under the circumstances, I'm pleased to have completed a professional job. I'm surprised at the result, though —

I'm surprised that Jalabert won."

Although fourth at the final checkpoint, at the top of the circuit's only significant climb, the Briton clawed back enough time on the descent towards the San Sebastian seafront to move Tony Rominger, the Swiss veteran, out of the bronze-medal position.

"I took it carefully on the way up the climb because of the headwind and because I knew that there was still a lot of work to be done once over the top," Boardman said. "Time-trials aren't over until you cross the finishing line."

While the wheels literally came off Alex Zülle's challenge only 500 metres from the start ramp, as technical prob-

lems forced the defending champion to stop and seek mechanical assistance, Jalabert, Boardman and Sergei Gontchar, of Ukraine, set the early pace on the undulating route. However, Gontchar, who led at each of the three checkpoints, faded in the final ten kilometres and, as Jalabert increased his effort, his chances of the gold medal slipped away.

"I'm very surprised to have won," Jalabert, 28, from the Tarr region of southwest France, said. The world's top-ranked rider, his expected challenges for victory in the Tour de France and Tour of Spain this year had ended in disappointment. "I felt very relaxed today because there

was nothing to lose," he said. "I wasn't one of the favourites so the most I was hoping for was the bronze medal."

"I knew that it was a tricky route and that it was important to keep something in reserve for the finish. Now I hope that I can recover well and ride strongly in Sunday's road race."

David Millar, newly-turned professional and Boardman's compatriot, finished in a respectable twentieth place. "It was tough with the wind," Millar, 20, said, "but it was good experience and I held back a little so that I can work hard for the team's chances on Sunday."

Results, page 44

IN BRIEF

Clash of dates threatens meeting

THE 1998 European athletics championships in Budapest may have to be put back because of a clash of dates with the Hungarian Formula One motor racing grand prix (David Fowell writes).

Although the European championships were fixed in the calendar long ago, the International Motor Sport Federation announced on Wednesday that the grand prix would be staged in the city on August 16, the day before the athletics are due to start.

Record broken

Swimming: Michael Klim broke the world 100 metres butterfly record at the Australian national championships in Brisbane yesterday. Klim, 20, recorded a time of 52.15sec to better the previous record, set by Denis Pankratov, of Russia, by 0.12sec.

No change

Motor racing: Jackie Stewart yesterday announced an unchanged line-up for his Ford-powered Formula One team next season. Rubens Barrichello, of Brazil, will again be partnered by Jan Magnussen, of Denmark, in 1998.

Petchey beaten

Tennis: Mark Petchey, of Great Britain, was defeated 6-3, 6-2 in his second-round match by Henrik Holm, of Sweden, in the Challenger tournament in Arizona, but Sam Smith, the British No 1, beat Jessica Steck, of South Africa, 5-7, 6-2, 6-1 in the women's event.

Court out

Crickets: Inzamam-ul-Haq, the Pakistan batsman, has been ordered to return to a court in Toronto on charges that he assaulted a spectator during a match in the Sahara Cup last month.

AN EXCLUSIVE TIMES NEWSPAPERS PRIZE DRAW

THE TIMES

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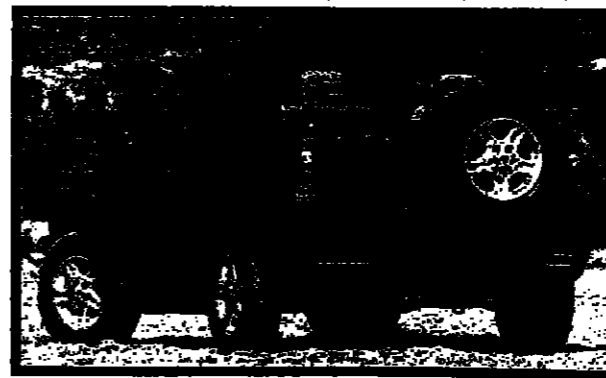
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be accepted as offered. Winners cannot specify the car they wish to receive. 10 The cars will be delivered to the winners' homes in the UK only. 11 The Golf VR6 and Renault Espace will be available on December 1, 1997, the Lotus Elise in January 1998 and the Land Rover Freelander in February 1998. 12 No purchase necessary. You can obtain bonus tokens and an entry form by sending a stamped sae to: The Times/Churchill's Token Request, PO Box 5077, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 7GB. A

maximum of three bonus tokens per sae permitted, requests must be received by November 1, 1997. 13 You can collect the tokens each day in person (Mon-Fri) from News International, 1 Virginia St, London E1 9UN or 124, Portman St, Kinling Park, Glasgow G41. 14 Winners will be notified by November 30, 1997. 15 Normal TNL rules apply, available by sending a stamped sae to the token request address above marked Prize-draw Rules, 16 Promoter: TNL, 1 Pennington St, E1 9UN

CHANGING TIMES

TENNIS

Henman steers clear of calamity

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT IN VIENNA

THE best thing about Tim Henman's performance in defeating Jan Apell here yesterday was that he came through in straight sets. Apell, of Sweden, presented the sort of obstacle that has previously upended the Great Britain No 2 like a crudely outstretched foot. In that context, Henman's 6-3, 6-3 triumph in the second round of the CA Trophy was as welcome as it was ultimately secure.

Although his opponent rarely threatened, Henman performed a few notches below the standard that he raised in dismissing Felix Mantilla, the No 7 seed, 24 hours earlier. Henman is vulnerable when confronted by a player with nothing to lose and Apell, world ranked No 727 after 13 months on the sidelines with shoulder injuries, certainly fitted that category.

Nevertheless, after his dismissal of Mantilla, this was progress of a sort if measured against Henman's hangover-style performances in the wake of some notable victories. He succumbed tamely in the Wimbledon quarter-finals after routing Richard Krajicek, the defending champion. He was then felled by Wayne Ferreira after sinking Thomas Muster, seeded No 6, in the US Open. In between, he had capitulated to Laurent Leblanc, the world No 885, in a tournament in Canada.

The portents were ominous, therefore. Apell's opening-round defeat of Jan Siemerink, the beaten finalist here last year, offered him plenty of encouragement going into the contest. Indeed, it was he who fashioned the first break point midway through the opening set, prompting Henman to ace his way out of danger. As if stung by the threat, Henman captured Apell's next service game before closing out the set with an emphatic overhead smash. The act marked an inappropriate conclusion to a set that could have gone either way.

As with his joust against Mantilla, Henman broke his opponent early in the second set before immediately squandering the advantage. However, Apell's lack of match practice eventually engulfed him and a pair of double faults handed Henman the initiative at 3-2. With unforgotten errors now flowing liberally from the Swede's racket, particularly on the forehand wing, Henman was able to coast home in 74 minutes. He now meets Karol Kucera, of Slovakia, whom he beat for the loss of five games in Basle last week, for a place in the semi-finals.

Henman later maintained that he was always in control. "This was a good opportunity and I wasn't going to waste it," he said. "He [Apell] was



Henman drills his backhand yesterday during a victory over Apell that takes him through to the quarter-finals of the Vienna indoor tournament

entitled to have his chances, but I felt very comfortable. I thought it was another good performance, fairly straightforward on a fast indoor court."

If Henman retains plenty of scope to improve his powers of concentration, he has taken further steps to refine his physique. He has recruited Tim Newenham, with whom he has occasionally worked in

the past, to a full-time post as his personal fitness trainer. Previously employed in a similar capacity at the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), Newenham, 37, is to travel with Henman in an effort to increase his bulk, strength and overall fitness.

Newenham competed in the Commonwealth Games and went on to coach the British javelin squad before joining

the LTA two years ago. He believes that Henman, 23, is capable of considerable physical development. "Tim is deceptively strong for his size, but he is definitely young enough to put on bulk," Newenham said.

"Among other things, we are working on cutting down his recovery time between matches. It will require quite a lot of intense work with the

medicine ball, weight-training and sprinting exercises — all adapted for the demands of tennis."

The programme is designed to reach fruition when Henman commences his 1998 campaign in Doha in January. Henman is 6ft 1in, but weighs little more than 11st. He is to increase his calorie intake as part of a diet requiring him to eat the equivalent of four

meals a day. "Everything is in balance at the moment," Newenham said, "but by eating more, you have more to work with."

Meanwhile, Greg Rusedski, the Britain No 1, was due on court last night to face Magnus Norman for a place in the quarter-finals. Should the two Britons advance to the semi-finals, they will confront each other.

JUDO

Douillet delights the home support

FROM JOHN GOODBODY IN PARIS

THE French were in raptures last night as David Douillet took his third successive heavyweight title when the world championships began here at the Stade de Bercy.

Douillet, who is also the Olympic title-holder, has now emulated the feat of Yasuhiro Yamashita, of Japan, who is the only other male fighter to have won three titles in this category.

Douillet beat Shini Shinohara, the outstanding Japanese, in the final — although French delight was tempered by the unsatisfactory manner of victory. The Japanese received four penalty points for passivity and the Frenchman himself received two and was probably about to get a third.

Douillet had damaged his left shoulder early in the day. He did well to defeat Pan Song, of China, larger even than Douillet, who is 6ft 6in and weighs 20st 12lb, and then the shaven-headed Turk, Selim Tataroglu. Tataroglu is the reigning European champion, but he was unable to stop the sweeping leg techniques of Douillet, who three times bowled over his opponent.

Michelle Rogers, from Salford, was the most consistent of the British competitors. As she weighs less than 12 stone in a heavyweight class where she often has to fight opponents who outweigh her by more than three stone, she can be excused for failing to get a medal.

Although losing to Dina Beltran, of Cuba, on a hold down, she came bravely back through the repechage, outwitting Sandra Koeppen, of Germany, who conceded a series of penalty points for passivity.

However, in the bout for the bronze medal, she met Sun Fuming, who narrowly beat Rogers on her way to taking the Olympic title in Atlanta.

Sun, ponderous but stable and exceptionally cunning, forced the Briton on the defensive, while occasionally producing her own deliberate attacks. Rogers was given two passivity points and then, when she tried to escalate the tempo of the contest, was clearly thrown by the Chinese girl.

Britain's two inexperienced light-heavyweights, Chloe Cowan, from Tyne and Wear, and Keith Davis, from London, had early defeats.

CRICKET

Saqlain's efforts fall short

THE first Test between Pakistan and South Africa in KwaZulu-Natal seems certain to end in a draw after the touring team moved to 359 for six by the end of the fourth day, in reply to Pakistan's first-innings total of 456.

Resuming on 139 for one, South Africa struggled for runs against the off spin of Saqlain Mushtaq, who has taken five for 126 from 59 overs, including an unchanged 33-over spell from half an hour before lunch until the close. It is the second time that Saqlain has taken five wickets in an innings and took his tally to 43 wickets in ten Test matches.

Saqlain seemed to have reached a landmark when he had Dave Richardson stumped, but it was ruled a no-ball. Richardson, who was on three, went on to make 30 not out. Any slight hopes that Pakistan had of establishing a winning position disappeared with an unfinished seventh-wicket partnership of 77 between Richardson and Shaun Pollock, who finished on 35 not out.

Earlier, Gary Kirsten, the South Africa vice-captain, had scored a painstaking 98 before falling to Saqlain, caught at second slip by Ijaz. The innings was in total contrast to the World Cup record score of 188 that he made on the same ground last year. He batted for 427 minutes, faced 344 balls and scored only seven boundaries, but was involved in two match-saving partnerships.

□ Carl Hooper, the West Indies all-rounder, will be returning to Kent as their overseas player next summer, having missed last season because of international commitments. His decision means that Kent will have to dispense with the services of Paul Strang, the Zimbabwe leg spinner.

RUGBY UNION: BATH PUT ENGLAND WING UP FOR SALE MIDWAY THROUGH CONTRACT

Sleightholme left out in cold

BY DAVID HANDS RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ALTHOUGH Bath will not confirm their XV to play Pontypridd in a crucial Heineken Cup match tomorrow until a few hours before kick-off, there is the intriguing possibility of Jon Sleightholme parading his wares on the wing to potential buyers. The England wing has been told that he has no long-term future at Bath and must now take whatever opportunities he can to set out his stall.

Sleightholme, 25, and capped in 12 successive internationals before losing his place for the match against Australia in July, still has 18 months of a three-year contract to run, but his development has not persuaded Bath to keep him when they might reasonably hope for a six-figure transfer fee. If he is to revive his international career, Sleightholme needs regular first-team play.

Even though Clive Woodward, who watched Newcastle's five-try dismissal of Northampton on Wednesday, acknowledges that there is a shortage of top-class wings in England, the England coach still omitted Sleightholme from his elite squad. For their part, Bath are still looking overseas: they have three international wings — Adebayo Adebayo, Ieuan Evans and Simon Genge — on their books (though the playing future of the last of those must be in doubt because of his persistent foot injury) and they hope to

add Brian Lima, the Western Samoa wing, to their stable next year. Bath, with Richmond, are also contemplating the loss of their Argentina internationals when the Allied Dunbar Premiership resumes on October 18. German Llanes will be a replacement against Pontypridd and Federico Mendez, after recovering from a shoulder injury, will play in Bath's second XV tomorrow.

"There is a degree of flexibility between us and the players," Andy Robinson, the Bath director of rugby, said. "A lot depends upon the club's needs." John Kingston, the Richmond director of rugby, admits that clubs employing overseas players will need to make provision for their national requirements, as opposed to five nations' players, where Kingston expects greater uniformity of fixture-making.

"I would never stop players appearing for their country," Kingston said. There is a strong possibility that the club's requirements on October 18 against

Harlequins will come first, when Argentina are scheduled to play Romania, probably the weakest opponents in a tournament that also involves France, who earlier this week picked three English-based players in their squad, and Italy.

The Quinell brothers from Richmond, Scott and Craig, have been named in the Wales squad from which the teams to play Tonga on November 25 and New Zealand four days later will be selected. Scott Quinell showed his recovery from a groin injury during his club's 15-9 defeat by Saracens on Wednesday night, while Richmond and the Welsh Rugby Union hope that differences that have existed over training schedules have been resolved.

Ieuan Evans, who has been struggling with a groin injury, has been omitted from the squad, although Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, emphasised that fitness rather than form was the criteria. The same is true of the injured Llanelli pair, Wayne Proctor and Nigel Davies.

WALE SQUAD: Backs: M Black (Swansea), G Evans (Llanelli), N Walker (Cardiff), G Thomas (Bridgend), D James (Pontypridd), A Bateman (Richmond), S Gibbs (Swansea), L Davies (Cardiff), N Boscobel (Llanelli), A Thomas (Swansea), N Jenkins (Pontypridd), S Hayward (Bristol), R Howley (Cardiff), P John (Pontypridd), I Moore (Richmond), Forwards: C Lewis (Swansea), I Budd (Swansea), A Lewis (Cardiff), B Young (Cardiff), L Martin (Cardiff), B Williams (Richmond), J Humphreys (Cardiff), R McIvor (Llanelli), G Jenkins (Swansea), Gareth Llewellyn (Cardiff), M Voyte (Llanelli), M Rowley (Pontypridd), C Quinell (Richmond), C Stephens (Cardiff), S Moore (Swansea), S Williams (Cardiff), M Spiller (Pontypridd), G Jones (Cardiff), R Appleyard (Swansea), S Quinell (Richmond), C Wyatt (Llanelli).

HOCKEY

Conway makes timely return

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

NICK CONWAY, who had been coaching in the United States during the summer, has rejoined Teddington as premier division clubs face a double bill in the National League this weekend. Teddington have tough away matches, against Hounslow tomorrow and Southgate on Sunday, and Conway's return is timely. He replaces Hawk,

who is not available, in support of Billson and Viles in the front line.

Hounslow, having started with a 3-2 away victory against Guildford last week, have called on Lanoie, an England Under-18 player, to stabilise their defence. Owen Jones, who was injured last week, is out of action and Kirkland is still unavailable. However,

Hounslow have Gillmon, Whalley and Liddar, their fast front-runners, available.

Kalbir Takher, who injured an ankle during training and took no part in Cannock's 2-1 victory last week against Old Loughtonians, is expected to be out of action for the next two weeks.

Despite the absence of the injured Parnham and Johnson, who is being rested after the junior World Cup, Cannock claim to be well covered for their visit to Beeston and the home match on Sunday against Doncaster. East Grinstead, who entertain Southgate and face an away match against Hounslow, are at full strength, with Gibson and Bhatti in attack supported by McConnell and Orleib, the South Africans. Reading, the title-holders, expect to have Pearn, the England Under-21 centre forward, back in the squad.

Reading have recruited Tobin Seagall, a goalkeeper, from Canada. John MacKinnon, another Canada international, has joined Old Loughtonians.

Welsh pursue entry

ANNE ELLIS, the president of the Welsh Hockey Union, is nothing if not persistent (Cathy Harris writes). After the union's request for the top Welsh women's clubs to be admitted to the English national league was rejected last season, she says that she intends to raise the subject again.

The concept has already proved successful for the men's teams from Whichurch and Swansea, which compete in the premier division of the West of England League. If it works for the men, Ellis argues, it can work for the women. The English Hockey Association

has said that although it would pose logistical problems, another application would be carefully considered.

Ellis, a former Great Britain captain and coach, is dedicated to arresting Wales's plummeting world ranking as well as seeing more players represent Britain. "If we aren't in a competitive situation, we'll never make it," she said. "Our players have to be tested every week, not two or three times a season."

COMMONWEALTH GAMES DRAW: Women: Pool A: Australia, India, Jamaica, Scotland, Malaysia, Zimbabwe, Pool B: England, Wales, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, Singapore.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Lowe resumes in management role

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THERE were times during Great Britain's ill-starred tour of New Zealand last year when Phil Lowe must have felt like resigning from the manager's job, but his reappointment for the three-match British Gas series against the Australian Super League team next month came as no surprise.

Lowe, 47, has a new coaching team in Andy Goodway, Shaun McRae and Daryl Howell. Alongside Phil Lawder, Goodway's predecessor as head coach, Lowe's man-management skills helped foster a young, committed team in New Zealand, a team that was badly set down by the decision of the Rugby Football League (RFL) to recall home a dozen players early in the tour. Lowe was utterly critical of the RFL's stance, but the challenge of eating Australia in a series, beyond him in his international laying days, has lured the full Kingston Rovers director to one more effort.

"I expect there will be some new faces in the squad this time, but, given my experience managing international teams, I should be able to help

them blend into the squad. I believe we can select a Test team capable of beating Australia," Lowe said.

"Nobody can deny that we lack the depth of players available to the Aussies, but if we dedicate ourselves to the task, then we can go all the way. I worked with Andy Goodway when he was Phil Lawder's assistant during the 1995 World Cup and I have great respect for his ability."

If Britain have an advantage, it is that a large part of the Australia side will be occupied with the world club championship up until two weeks before the first international, at Wembley on November 1. Denis Betts, whose last appearance it will be for Auckland Warriors should they lose their semi-final at Brisbane Broncos today, is Britain's only player still involved in the tournament.

With injuries to Shaun Edwards and Tony Smith and the likely exclusion of Gary Connolly and Jason Robinson by the Australian Rugby League, Britain — and Wigan Warriors, next season — need Betts back fit and early.



Leader of the pack: Lord Archer polishes his break-building skills yesterday

Archer reveals fondness for reds

LORD ARCHER of Weston-super-Mare took a break from Blackpool yesterday to take his bow as the president of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA). Like his party, he said, the sport has "a great future".

The former deputy chairman of the Conservative Party and best-selling author sees his primary function as promoting a sport that, despite television viewing figures that are the envy of many rivals, has often been ignored in terms of sponsorship.

A keen follower of the game since he first played on a full-sized table at the Wes-

ton-super-Mare YMCA as a schoolboy, he hopes that his appointment will cause other high-profile figures to "come out from under the floorboards and admit they love watching snooker as well".

Lord Archer, who highest break is a modest 32, said at the House of Commons: "What we have got to get over is that here we have a good, clean sport which can be

tremendously exciting, in which great sportsmanship is always displayed and which has, in my opinion, enormous potential for sponsorship."

Snooker's hierarchy is concerned over the recent unveiling of Government plans to ban tobacco sponsorship, but, without getting drawn into the debate, Lord Archer maintained that all existing contracts with principal sponsors, such as Embassy, Regal and Benson and Hedges, should be honoured as they had been signed in good faith.

He becomes the first recognised snooker outsider to be appointed WPBSA president.

BOXING

Hamed must forget unification of title

BY SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT

NASEEM HAMED has had to abandon all hopes of unifying the world featherweight championship. Instead, he is to concentrate on making a name for himself in the United States.

Frank Warren, his promoter, said yesterday that, after months of negotiations with the managers of Wilfredo Vasquez, the World Boxing Association champion, and Luisito Espinosa, who holds the World Boxing Council belt, he had begun to despair of ever making the matches.

"All I'm looking for now is big fights," Warren said. "I'm in the Naseem Hamed business. He is as important to me as Mike Tyson is to Don King." The promoter is at present having talks with Home Box Office, a leading American cable television company, to sign a package for Hamed to box in the United States, but he said, there was no question of Hamed training permanently there, as has been suggested.

"If a deal was concluded," Warren said, "he will only go there to train just before fights. The British public has always

been behind him and he's not going to turn his back on them."

Hamed, who defends his World Boxing Organisation title against José Badillo, of Puerto Rico, at Sheffield tomorrow, met the challenger yesterday. Badillo is a late replacement and an improvement on the original choice, Victor Llerena, of Colombia.

Typically, Hamed said that the change of opponent would have little effect on the outcome of the bout. Hamed was certain that Badillo would fall in the third round, just as he had said the other man would. "I already said six weeks ago the fight would end in the third round and, regardless [of the opponent], I don't change."

Warren said: "This is a better fighter than the other guy. This man is ranked in the top three of all the other world organisations. I brought him in because they are looking for a quality fight."

Thanks to the change of opponent, Hamed can now expect to upstage Chris Eubank, his rival showman, who appears on the same card against Joe Calzaghe.

MOTOR RACING: SCHUMACHER WAITS TO POUNCE ON ANY MISTAKE IN GRAND PRIX

Villeneuve tries to dispel doubts

FROM MICHAEL CALVIN
IN SUZUKA

MIND games were on the agenda in the suitably surreal playground of Suzuka yesterday afternoon. Jacques Villeneuve prepared by playing Dungeons & Dragons, the labyrinth of lateral thinking that has become his favourite computer game. Michael Schumacher trained his brain by playing poker for three days in a Tokyo hotel.

Personalities are routinely distorted in Formula One's phoney war, during which any hint of hesitancy assumes inordinate importance. As the drivers sat next to each other, delivering a succession of inanities that purported to be a reasoned commentary on their duel for the world championship, they were notably ill at ease.

Schumacher offered little more than his name, rank and chassis number. Villeneuve, who needs only to finish ahead of him in the Japanese Grand Prix on Sunday to win the title, responded with uncharacteristic venom. "What do you want me to do, kiss him?" he exclaimed when photographers implored them to shake hands. Schumacher smirked, evidently heartened by his rival's discomfort.

The conspiracy theorists have been quick to suggest that the German will indulge his ruthless streak here, in the self-proclaimed Wonderland of Sport. Damon Hill, who won his title at Suzuka last season, amplified the debate by triggering memories of the collision at Adelaide, which allowed Schumacher to rob him of the championship in 1994.

"Michael has nothing to lose," he said. "He'll try anything to prevent Jacques winning the title here. He has to do one of his specials." He paused, smiled mischievously and refused to elaborate.

Schumacher, nine points behind the Canadian with only two races left, will only profit from another convenient coming together with his principal rival if his Ferrari survives unscathed. The precedents are compelling — both Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna were crowned as world champion after collisions at Suzuka — but the real significance of the stage whispers lies in the seeds of doubt they plant in Villeneuve's mind.

"I hope it doesn't come to that," Villeneuve said, when he was asked to contemplate the apparently unthinkable calamity of being shunted into a gravel trap. "Michael seems to be pretty straightforward and it would be a shame if that happened. We will have to wait and see, but it has happened many times in the past, to many different drivers."

"It kinda passes as normality in Formula One. After working so hard for a full season, it is an easy thing to



Villeneuve and Schumacher succumb to requests to shake hands at the hollow press conference yesterday

do. The higher the stakes, the less you feel about doing something like that, I guess. My battles with him were fair last season, but we were not fighting for the championship."

The cynics suggest that he may have more to fear from the fraternal loyalty of Ralf Schumacher. He has been Michael's poker partner this week and claims he has no need to atone for his involvement in the first-corner accident at the Nürburgring that crippled his brother's Ferrari and swung the championship in Villeneuve's favour.

"It was a real shame that such a thing happened between us," he said. "It wasn't 100 per cent my fault. These things happen and they can't be changed. From the family's point of view, obviously I hope Michael will still win the championship, but realistically, it will be very difficult for him to turn things around."

Villeneuve is as well-prepared, physically, as he has

ever been. He has spent the summer working with Irwin Gollner, the fitness coach who helped Hill to the title. Ironically, his strength of will is likely to be more decisive. He must be self-contained, blind to any diversionary tactics.

"There is no point me trying to get into Michael's mind," he said. "It is better to know nothing about him, because

my impression could easily be a false impression. I have to concentrate on my own game. Many things happen too quickly in this game and you have to be ready to react."

Hill put the challenge confronting his erstwhile teammate into the correct context. "Jacques will find it extremely difficult to live with himself if he fails to win the champion-

ship now," he said. "Michael has the experience of winning two titles. He will not be fazed by the occasion. Jacques may be a little too eager."

Villeneuve, infinitely more relaxed in an informal setting rather than a gladiatorial, set-piece press conference, is a realist. "The pressure on me this year is different," he said. "Last year, I could win it. This year, I can lose it and I know how bad that will feel."

"I can't tell you how or why, but I do know I have improved this season. It's a subtle process, but the chemistry is right. I really don't know how Michael does his job and I don't really care. I feel I can beat him anyway. I've evolved, learnt from my mistakes. The best thing you can be in this situation is yourself."

Unfortunately, that is not easy. The world is ready to rush, to make superficial judgments about Villeneuve's talent and character. Michael Schumacher is waiting and watching.

HOW VILLENEUVE AND SCHUMACHER MEASURE UP	
Nationality: Canadian	Nationality: German
Age: 26	Age: 28
Car: Williams-Renault	Car: Ferrari
Races: 30	Races: 100
Pole positions: 11	Pole positions: 17
Wins: 11	Wins: 26
This season's wins: 7	This season's wins: 4
Current position: 1st, 77pts	Current position: 2nd, 68pts
Titles: IndyCar champion 1995	Titles: Formula One world champion 1994, 1995

ICE HOCKEY

Nottingham prepare for Scots' challenge

BY NORMAN DE MESQUITA

THE Benson and Hedges Cup quarter-finals will be played during the next week over two legs, with three first-leg games taking place tomorrow. Results so far have shown that the eight Superleague teams are closely matched and it should mean close contests to decide the semi-finalists.

Ayr Scottish Eagles and Nottingham Panthers staged an epic play-off semi-final last March and players from both sides will be hoping that a result can be achieved this time without prolonged overtime, as was the case then. In a recent league match in Nottingham, the Panthers beat the Eagles 1-0 and, with the quality of goaltending

higher than ever, another low-scoring contest is likely. Basingstoke Bison, who finished bottom last season, have a tough task at the Newcastle Cobras, whose goaltender, Stephen Foster, has been difficult to beat. In the third tie, Bracknell Bees have the misfortune to face the most improved team in the competition, Manchester Storm, who finished top of their qualifying group, suffering only one defeat in the process, at Ayr. They should prove too strong for the Bees.

The fourth tie, between Cardiff Devils and Sheffield Steelers, will be played next Friday and Saturday, because the Sheffield Arena is not available tomorrow.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 43

HALIOTIS

(a) A genus of univalve sea shells, the "Ear Shells". The tropical species are an important source of mother of pearl. One species is found as far north as Guernsey. The *Oxford Gazette*, 1931: "Toe bone with carved face and haliotis eyes."

GLACON

(a) A medium-sized ice floe. The *Geographical Journal*, 1933: "Drift ice was pretty thick, and we were constantly under helm to avoid the 'pans' as the seamen and fishermen call them, or 'glacons', which I believe is the scientific term."

GRAVETTE

(a) A long, narrow flint shaped like a knife of Upper Palaeolithic date. It has a sharp cutting edge and a blunted back. A *Million Years of Man*, 1963: "One of the uses of their gravettes was to decorate the ivory of the slaughtered mammoths."

HAMBERGITE

(a) A basic borate of beryllium, Be²⁺(OH)₂BO₃. It occurs as colourless orthorhombic crystals that have a strong double refraction. It was discovered by A. Hamberg in 1889 and takes its eponym from him. It was originally found in Norway, though not of gem quality. More recently discovered in central Madagascar.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1 Rxf7+ Bxf7 2 Ne6+ Kx8 (2... Kx8 3 Qx7 mate) 3 Nc7+ and the black queen is lost.

BOWLS

Worldwide tour set for take-off

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

BOWLS takes another step towards full professionalism on Sunday, when the Bupa Care Homes Open gets underway at the Preston Guild Hall under the control, for the first time, of the newly-formed World Bowls Tour (WBT).

The tour is an amalgam of players and officials, with full representatives from the Professional Bowls Association (PBA) on the board, together with two each from the sport's governing bodies, the World Bowls Board and the World Indoor Bowls Council. The tour has appointed Gordon Dunwoodie as tournament director and hopes to do for bowls what the European Tour has done for golf, with events all over the world.

For the first time, too, the PBA has been allowed to provide qualifiers for a televised event and it will be interesting to see how the new professionals Billy Mellors, George Sneddon, Les Gillett and Nigel Williams measure up to the standards set by players such as Hugh Duff, Andy Thomson, Richard Coursey and Tony Allcock.

The PBA has opened its doors to women, but in the absence of any female qualifiers, four have been invited, attracting some criticism. Margaret Johnston, the world's best woman bowler, has been drawn to play the No 2 seed, Andy Thomson, who has been one of the most outspoken critics of the invitations. "If they qualify through the play-offs, fair enough, but I don't think they should be invited," he said.

TELEVISION CHOICE

Trude comes on song

Vets in Practice

BBC1, 8.00pm

And so we say farewell to the excitable Trude, the cool and capable Alison and the itchy-footed Joe as our vets complete their first six months in the job. But be assured that they will be back, for this is far too good a subject to be jettisoned. The combination of an assortment of young professionals tentatively learning a difficult trade, and an often tricky caseload, continues to yield splendid footage. Difficult birds feature tonight as Alison has to cope with an aggressive goose which has broken its wing and Joe is faced with a noisy parrot. Meanwhile, Trude, a lot more confident than the bundle of nerves we met in the earlier series, sings to a girl Labrador brought in with a swollen neck. As it happens her diagnosis is spot on, but you feel that being serenaded by Trude is enough to make the sickest creature feel better.

Dan Pearson: Routes Around the World

Channel 4, 8.00pm

Since the title of this series gives little idea of the content, a word of explanation might be useful. The programmes follow Dan Pearson, a rising young garden designer, as he forsakes Britain in search of fresh sources of inspiration. This means some long trips, starting in Japan. It is probably fair to say that Japanese gardens are a minority enthusiasm over here, being too austere and formalised for most tastes. One of Pearson's examples, the Koanji Temple rock garden in Kyoto, exactly fits the stereotype, minimalist creation designed to encourage its visitors to undistracted contemplation. But elsewhere in the former imperial capital Pearson finds gardens which, while highly mannered and exquisitely detailed, have a green lushness that startles the eye. Moreover, they are rarely open to the public, let alone television crews.

Friends

Channel 4, 9.00pm

For a change, in the continuing saga of those ever-so-pleased-with-themselves New Yorkers, we have a two-part episode. It comes complete with a cliffhanger designed to make sure we tune in next week. First off is yet another new man for Phoebe



Joe Inglis and Emma Milne (BBC1, 7pm)

(Lisa Kudrow), the joke being that he speaks no English so their romance has to be conducted through an interpreter. But this is only a diversion from the main plot which is about that increasingly tiresome couple, Ross (David Schwimmer) and Rachel (Jennifer Aniston). He wants to celebrate their first anniversary. She is too busy with work. He storms out and finds female company elsewhere. It is predictable, mean-spirited, but a formula able to hook more than five million regular viewers in Britain alone makes such carping pointless.

The Nation's Favourite Love Poem

BBC1, 10.20pm

National Poetry Day, which fell yesterday, is again the cue for inviting viewers to vote for a favourite piece of verse. This is the third such exercise, the previous ones having identified Rudyard Kipling's *If* as the all-time winner and Jenny Joseph's *Warning*, a meditation on reckless and irresponsible old age, as the most favoured example written since the Second World War. Strangely perhaps, love poems did not figure strongly on either occasion but this is the genre chosen for the 1997 vote. This despite a survey (if you believe surveys) which suggested that we are most likely to read and write poetry while in love. As is becoming a tradition, Griff Rhys Jones will be on hand to announce the winner and there will be readings of this, and other love poems, by Imogen Stubbs and Nigel Havers. Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

The Food Programme

Radio 4, 12.25pm

One way of defining a really distinctive radio programme is to be able to say that there is nothing like it in any other medium. So *The Food Programme*, back for a new series, is really distinctive. It is not about how to make a dish, much less is it a vehicle for a cook on an ego trip. What the programme does is much more interesting than that, for it tackles trends (but not fads) in the way food is used and, at its best, the programme uncovers the sort of behaviour that food manufacturers would rather keep to themselves. Not the least of the show's assets is its presenter, Derek Cooper, whose mix of charm and authority makes him one of the best radio presenters. Today's subject is harvests.

RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe Breakfast Show 9.00am Simon Mayo 12.00pm John Peel 1.30pm Radio 1 Breakfast 3.00pm Mark Radcliffe 4.00pm Radio 1 5.00pm Radio 1 6.00pm Radio 1 7.00pm Radio 1 8.00pm Radio 1 9.00pm Radio 1 10.00pm Radio 1 11.00pm Radio 1 12.00am Radio 1

RADIO 2

6.00am Simon Kennedy 7.30am John Peel 9.00am Ken Bruce 11.00am John Peel 1.30pm Radio 2 Breakfast 3.00pm Radio 2 4.00pm Radio 2 5.00pm Radio 2 6.00pm Radio 2 7.00pm Radio 2 8.00pm Radio 2 9.00pm Radio 2 10.00pm Radio 2 11.00pm Radio 2 12.00am Radio 2

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme 9.00am The Magazine with Brian Hayes 12.00pm Radio 5 Live 2.00pm Radio 5 Live 3.00pm Radio 5 Live 4.00pm Radio 5 Live 5.00pm Radio 5 Live 6.00pm Radio 5 Live 7.00pm Radio 5 Live 8.00pm Radio 5 Live 9.00pm Radio 5 Live 10.00pm Radio 5 Live 11.00pm Radio 5 Live 12.00am Radio 5 Live

VIRGIN RADIO

7.00am The Breakfast Show with Nick Abbot 10.00am Graham Dorrans 1.00pm Radio Virgin 2.00pm Radio Virgin 3.00pm Radio Virgin 4.00pm Radio Virgin 5.00pm Radio Virgin 6.00pm Radio Virgin 7.00pm Radio Virgin 8.00pm Radio Virgin 9.00pm Radio Virgin 10.00pm Radio Virgin 11.00pm Radio Virgin 12.00am Radio Virgin

TALK RADIO

6.30am Bill Overton and Carol McElhin 9.00am Scott Chisholm 12.00pm Lorraine Kelly 2.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00pm Peter Dinkley 7.00pm Sportszone 10.00pm Mike Allen 1.00am Mike Dickinson

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Andrew McGregor. Includes Dvorak (Toscanini in C for Two Violins and Viola, Op 74); Glazunov (Oriental Rhapsody); Purcell (They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships, 257); Mahler (Symphony No 4); Prokofiev (The Love for Three Oranges); Brahms (Cello Sonata No 1 in E minor, Op 38) 9.00am Morning Collection. Introduced by Peter Hobday. Includes Handel (Concerto a Due Cori No 2 in F); Mozart (Cello Concerto in F, K370); Artaud (Symphony in D) 10.00am Musical Encounters, with Stephanie Hughes. Includes Artaud (The Poet's Dream); Schubert (Prelude in A minor, Op 108); Barber (Excursions); Medtner (Two Jewish Songs); Beethoven (Fantezia); Hummel (Septet in C, Op 114, Military); Scarlatti (Piano Concerto) 12.00pm Composers of the Week: Dufay, Binchois and Their Contemporaries 1.00pm News. The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. Live from St George's Basilica, Bristol. Chris de Souza introduces the Medici Quartet. Vaughan Williams (String Quartet No 2); Beethoven (String Quartet in F, Op 14 No 1) 2.00pm The BBC Archives: The Queen's Hall. Philip Fowles recreates the atmosphere of the Queen's Hall in London which was destroyed by a bomb in 1941. Includes from the Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Henry Wood, the pianist Wilhelm Backhaus playing a Mozart concerto and part of the Verdi Requiem, conducted by Arturo Toscanini during the 1939 London Music Festival

RADIO 4

5.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00am News 6.10am Fanning Today 6.25am Prayer for the Day 6.30am Today 8.45am Running in the Family. Paul Bristow reads Michael Ondaatje's account of his family's life in Cayton (S5) 9.58am Weather 9.00am News 9.05am Desert Island Discs. Sue Lawley's commentary is Julia Holland (C) 9.45am Gerry's Radio comic reflections on life from Gerry Anderson 10.00am (FM) News: Old Stubborn Guts. The writer and broadcaster Studs Terkel explores his personal experience 10.00am (LW) An Act of Worship 10.15am (LW) On This Day, with Geoffrey Wheeler 10.30am Woman's Hour. Introduced from London 11.30am The Natural History Programme. See Choice 12.00pm News 12.05pm You and Yours, with Mark Whitaker 12.25pm The Food Programme. See Choice 12.55am Weather 1.00am The World at One, with Nick Clarke at the Conservative Party conference in Blackpool and James Cox in London 1.40am The Archers (C) 1.55am Shipping Forecast 2.00am News: Classic Serial: The Lined Veil, by Jonathan Holloway, adapted from the novella by George Dick. With Toby Stephens and Edward Mitchell (C) 3.00am News: The Afternoon Shift, with Laura Taylor and guests 4.00am News 4.05am Kaleidoscope. Tim Marlow reviews David Bradley's latest work for the Birmingham Royal Ballet, Edward II

The Natural History Programme

Radio 4, 11.30am

"A lady rang in to say..." has become one of the more notorious openers in the anecdotal history of broadcasting, for the words were spoken by Michael Fish ten years ago next week and he went on to say that this lady had heard that a hurricane was coming. Fish could of course assure us that there would be no such thing. Britain awake the next day to a flattened landscape, though most of us could not listen to a contrite BBC forecaster because the power lines had been blown down along with the trees and quite a few buildings. The programme has a range of stories, tragic, amusing and everything in between, with the pick of them concerning a pregnant woman, a fallen tree and a fractured telephone line. Peter Barnard

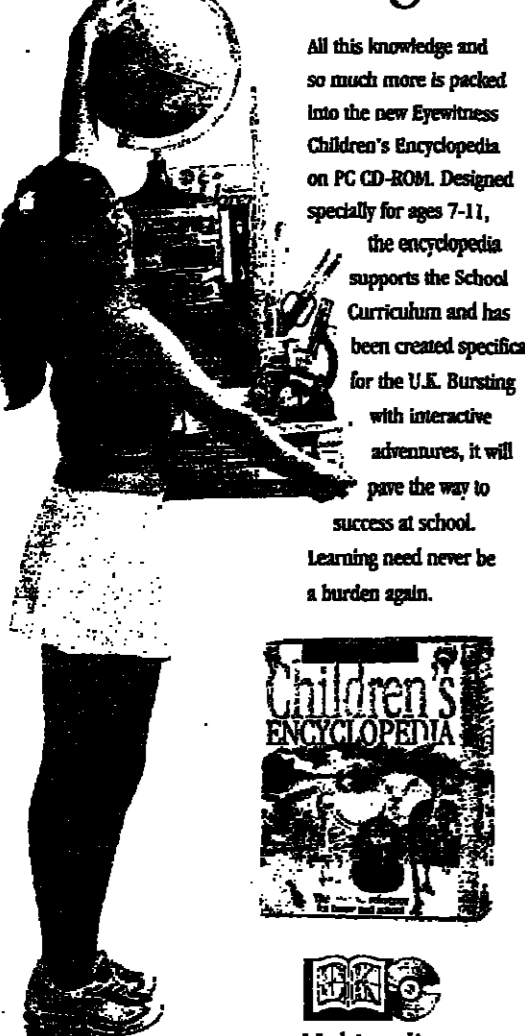
WORLD SERVICE

6.00am Newsday 6.30am Europe Today 7.00am News 7.15 The World Today 7.30am Pick of the Week 8.00am News 8.15 The World Today 8.30am Pick of the Week 8.45am News 9.00am News in German (S48 only) 9.10am Pause for Thought 9.15 Performance 9.30am John Peel 10.00am News 10.05am Business Report 10.15am History Today 10.30am BBC English Speaking of English 10.45am Sports Roundup 11.00am Newsday 11.30am Plants of Power 12.00am Newsday 12.30pm Focus on Faith 1.00am News in German (S48 only) 1.05am World Business Report 1.15am Britain Today 1.30am Ends of the World 1.45am Sports Roundup 2.00am Newsday 2.05am Outlook 2.30am Multitrack: Alternative 4.00am News 4.05am Football Extra 4.15am Paradox 4.30am Science in Action: News in German (S48 only) 5.00am Europe Today 5.30am World Business Report 5.45am Britain Today 6.00am News 6.15 The World Today 6.30am The Inside Guide: News in German (S48 only) 6.40am Spotlight 6.45am Sports Roundup 7.00am Newsday 7.30am Focus on Faith 8.00am News 8.05am Outlook 8.25am Pause for Thought 8.30am Multitrack: Alternative 8.45am News 9.00am News 10.05am World Business Report 10.15am Britain Today 10.30am People and Politics 11.00am Newsday 11.30am The World Today 11.45am Sports Roundup 12.00am News 12.05am Outlook 12.30am Multitrack: Alternative 1.00am Newsday 1.30am From the Weeklies 1.45am Britain Today 2.00am Newsday 2.30am Paradox 2.45am The Inside Guide 2.55am Spotlight 3.00am Newsday 3.30am People and Politics 4.00am News 4.05am World Business Report 4.15am Sports Roundup 4.30am The World Today: Weekend (Europe only) 4.45am Off the Shelf

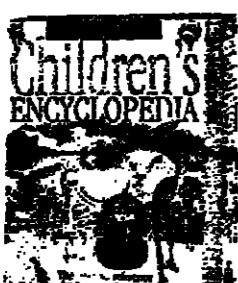
CLASSIC FM

6.00am Alan Menen 8.00am Henry Kelly. Includes the Hall of Fame Hour 1.00pm Listener Request Hour 2.00am Concerto. Mozart (Violin Concerto No 1 in B flat) 3.00am Jamie Crook 7.00am Newsnight with John Burningham 7.30am Sonata. Quercus (Sonata No 27 in B flat major for Flute and Continuo) 8.00am Evening Concert. Wagner, arr. Lemare (Ride of the Valkyries); Monteverdi (Adornatus Te); Haydn (Piano Concerto in D); Brahms (Liebeslieder Walzer); Strauss (Till Eulenspiegel); Schubert (Symphony No 4 in C minor, The Hour of the Wizard); Mahler (Symphony No 4 in C minor, The Hour of the Wizard) 10.00am Concerto (C) 4.00am Sally Patterson

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Confident Henman waltzes past Swede in Vienna

FRIDAY OCTOBER 10 1997

England coach calls for calm in the cauldron of World Cup qualifying showdown

Hoddle puts premium on composure

FROM OLIVER HOIT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT, IN ROME

GLENN HODDLE has been talking for some time now about how calmness will be the key in the Olympic Stadium tomorrow night, how the match will be won by the team that remains composed enough to play its natural game in the face of the howling crowd and the cloying pressure. Reflection is what the England coach is looking for in his squad as their World Cup qualifying showdown with Italy draws nearer and yesterday he and the man who is likely to be his captain passed their serenity tests with honours.



Relative values 7
Cool Sheringham 44

First, Hoddle had had to cope with the hostile questions of some Italian journalists. Disappointed with his decision to shield Paul Gascoigne from any form of contact with the media during his return to the city that used to be his home when he played for Lazio, they questioned Hoddle's faith in his midfield player's maturity. He was studiously unruffled by those exchanges.

Then, Hoddle played his part in a wonderful mini-farce. He had told the press conference that David Beckham was suffering from a heavy, chesty cold that could keep him out of the match and that Gareth Southgate was also struggling with an injury, the nature of which he did not wish to reveal.

Enter Roy Hodgson, the Blackburn Rovers manager, who has been drafted in to act as Hoddle's translator on this trip. In Italian, he told the local journalists about Beckham's condition. By the

time that he got to Southgate, though, he had forgotten that Hoddle had wanted the problem kept secret. Midway through his explanation, he started hopping about on one leg on the stage, tapping his right knee with his hand. For a split-second, Hoddle's face was a picture of dismay, but then it creased into a broad smile.

The England coach was undone, though, by the man most think he will name as his captain today. The fight against alcoholism has done many things for Tony Adams and another deeply thoughtful, searingly introspective conversation yesterday suggested that one of them has been to enhance his qualities as a leader of men.

Adams not only talks about serenity, but he exudes it, too. He talks slowly now, in such a studied, quiet way that it is almost soporific. There is something almost monastic about the tone of his words. Where he might once have

yelled and screamed a call to arms, he said, he would try to use his influence to steady young nerves as tomorrow's kick-off approached.

"Banging the toilet door has never won football matches," Adams said. "Maybe that was the kind of approach I used to adopt. This time, there might be a process of calming some of the younger boys down. You can go over the top in these situations. You can go over the top with enthusiasm and there is a danger you just run around like headless chickens. Calming down and using your brains should be what it is about. Our sides have always had the strength and the determination anyway. They are going to do their best. That is not a problem. A bit of knowledge and a bit of focus might be the way to go."

"It is hard to be serene during a football match, but beforehand we can be, can't we. I don't have to go running round the hotel like a nutcase any more. I am relaxed. In other times, I might be jumping around and it would all be eating away at me inside, but I don't do that anymore. Maybe you are seeing the real Tony Adams now."

"I have always been able to motivate people throughout the years and that is maybe why people have put me as a captain. I have been able to focus in on certain individuals. I preferred that to looking at myself. Maybe there was too much going on inside me to have a look at me. While I was looking at all the others and assessing their problems, I could just go out and play."

Adams, like Paul Ince earlier in the week, acknowledged that next summer would be his last chance to play in the World Cup finals, that he only had so many "bites at the cherry". He preferred to concentrate, though, on the help that football has given him in his fight against his addiction.

"I can see the qualities that made me a professional footballer," he said, "and I take the good points into my private life now. I look at all the good things that have made me a professional footballer for the past 18 years and I recognise that there is some kind of addiction that makes me get up every morning and try to prove myself on a football pitch. Getting up and getting out there and putting myself out there and being able to handle defeat and success, I can take all that into my private life."

"I don't think I ever took my career for granted. Maybe I got lost, shall we say. The reality is that I am still here and it is a wonderful reality. I have to pinch myself at times but I do not fear anything any more."

Finally, just before he got up to go, someone asked him if he had more good days than bad days. "Every day is a good day," Adams said with a smile. "If England win on Saturday, though, it will be an even better day."



Adams, Hoddle's probable choice as captain, exudes the serenity that the coach wants to instil in his squad. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Italy content to play waiting game

FROM BRIAN GLANVILLE IN FLORENCE

IN THE bright, hot sunshine of Coverciano yesterday, where the Italy team trained before leaving for Rome, hope hung in the air — hope that Ciro Ferrara, the central defender, would be match-fit, although that will not be decided until Saturday, according to Cesare Maldini, the Italy coach. Ferrara still feels some pain from his stomach muscle injury, but he is undergoing intensive physiotherapy and massage.

However, Maldini did admit "We have a great problem with the absence of Di Matteo, a great problem on the left of midfield. Little by little, people have forgotten the importance of this player." It looks as if Attilio Lombardo will be asked to fill the breach created by the loss through suspension of the Chelsea man, but they are very different kinds of player.

"It's just a game of football," said Marco Tardelli, a goalscorer in Italy's winning World Cup final in Madrid 15 years ago and now No 2 to Maldini. "It's not a war." No, he did not think the Italy team individually superior to England. "These are two teams at the same level. The winner will be the one which keeps its psychological aspect would be important, but goals could come in any way, at any time."



Tardelli, certainly, seemed cheerfully relaxed. Not so Christian Vieri, the probable Italy centre forward, who looked tense as he answered questions from journalists. As to whether the first 20-odd minutes might be decisive if Italy failed to score, he said: "After the first 25 minutes come another 25. If we haven't scored after half an hour, we have to stay calm and play as we know how. A goal can come five minutes or one minute from the end; you

can hit a post in the last minute." Alessandro Del Piero, scorer of the potentially devastating early goal for Juventus against Manchester United last week, is another who doubts that the first 20 minutes might be decisive. "The important thing for Italy," he said, "... is to win, rather than to score in the first 20 minutes or the last. We shall do everything to win this match. We'll cover every possibility — psychological, physical, technical and tactical. We shall exclude nothing that will enable us to win."

Gigi Riva, that prolific goalscorer of the past who is now attached to the national team, has great respect for England. "I see an England team much improved tactically," he said. "I saw them in France. If it wasn't for that piece of invention by Romario, they would never have deserved to lose to Brazil. They are much more solid and convincing now."

Paul Ince put the cat among the pigeons when he claimed that, when at Internazionale, his first manager, Ottavio Bianchi, told him that if he could not get the ball, he should go for the man.

Dino Baggio, the Italy midfielder, said: "Our football is tough, but not dirty, that's why Ince did well here. I've always admired him, he's a combative player who always gives it everything, more or less like me. It was no chance that sparks flew when we met each other. I didn't even finish the last Palma-Inter [match]. I got two yellow cards for fouls on him. But they were fouls, not murders. Who knows what went through his mind?"

It is now beginning to look as if Maldini will use Costacurta as sweeper, behind three marksmen — Cesare's son, Paolo

Maldini, said, somewhat surprisingly, that he thinks England will also play with a sweeper. "They've done it already," he said. "I saw their games in Georgia and Poland on TV; catenaccio and counter-attack. They were calm for many minutes, waiting for their opponents to open up, then they struck. That's how they play now and why should they change if a draw would be enough? When we played them in France, they waited for us so they could penetrate our defence. But at the Olympic, it will be different. In France, we were played out."

Heskey's cool forecast

EMILE HESKEY, the England Under-21 forward, is ready for another close encounter with Italy defenders in the European championship match in Rieti tonight.

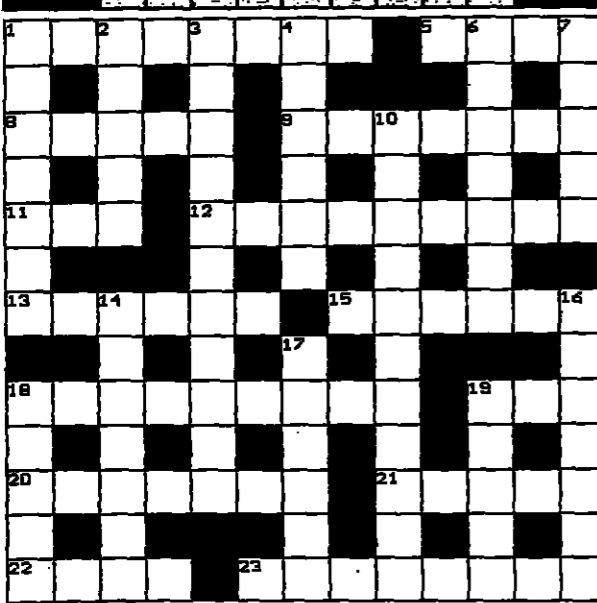
Heskey, of Leicester City, was the victim of several physical challenges in the first meeting with Italy at Ashton Gate, Bristol, in February, but is determined not to react in the return.

"The defenders stick tight

so you can't really go anywhere and are pulling and tugging away at you all the time," Heskey said. "There have been times when I have kicked out at people in a bit of retaliation, but overall I've managed to keep my temper reasonably well so far."

Victory is essential if England are to become one of the seven group winners who go through automatically to the finals.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1221

ACROSS

- 1 Neighbourhood (8)
- 2 Requests (4)
- 3 Important big (5)
- 4 Dr Johnson's biographer (7)
- 5 Tilt; endpiece (3)
- 6 The sky (poet) (9)
- 7 Fit for hard use (6)
- 8 Kampala's capital (6)
- 9 Puss eaten pod and all (9)
- 10 A motor (3)
- 11 Nautilus bewilder (7)
- 12 Violently (7)
- 13 High male voice (4)
- 14 Caution, discretion (8)

DOWN

- 1 Barge; smoker's aid (7)
- 2 Unworthy; vile (5)
- 3 Relieve feelings (3,3,5)
- 4 Herald's jacket (6)
- 5 (fr.) drinking den (7)
- 6 Adriatic port; banana sweet (5)
- 7 Massacred (11)
- 8 State dinner (7)
- 9 Put in order (7)
- 10 Practical joker (6)
- 11 Sicilian criminals (5)
- 12 Group of witches (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1220

- ACROSS: 1 Home Guard 6 Wad 8 Radiant 9 Dylan 10 Tote 11 Caucasus 13 Compel 14 Ribald 17 Diagonal 18 Mews 20 Etude 21 Centaur 22 Dye 23 Endlessly
- DOWN: 1 Heretic 2 Made to measure 3 Grab 4 Actual 5 Diabolic 6 Walls have ears 7 Dunes 12 Kerosene 15 Destroy 16 Rancid 17 Dread 19 Once

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Helmsman of the highest order

John Merricks, who died in a car crash at Punta Ala in Italy on Wednesday night, was among the highest echelon of British racing sailors. Most people would name Lawrence Smith, Ben Ainslie and the "Martians", John Merricks and Ian Walker, as this country's leading out-and-out racers.

His death at the age of 26 is thus the cruellest of blows, not only to his friends and family but to a sport that needed and thrived on John Merricks. He was an instinctive helmsman who knew how to win, but he was also a straightforward and honest individual who conducted himself with a maturity that belied his years.

He was a great communicator who was happy to do his bit to promote the sport, and he was fun to be around, even when the pressure was on. Merricks was known to enjoy a good food fight and, when the trophies were won, he could let rip in a nightclub. Anyone who was with him in Savannah, Georgia, after he collected his hard-won Olympic silver medal last summer will never forget Merricks that night, as a tide of relief and happiness swept through him. He came from a modest

Edward Gorman pays tribute to a racing sailor who had the world at his feet

background in Leicester and, after starting his sailing career on Rutland Water with his father in a Mirror dinghy at the age of 12, he progressed through 420s and then to 470s. He was a classic product of the Royal Yachting Association squad system and benefited enormously from coming under the wing of the national coach, Jim Saltonstall, relatively early on.

He showed promise, but it was not until he teamed up with Ian Walker in 1993 that he realised his full potential. They brought the best out of each other and the victories began to roll in. They dominated their class in the run-up to the Olympic Games and survived a bad regatta at Savannah to earn the silver medal by one point. Merricks was at his best

going downwind as he used to like to stand at the back of the boat, looking for the shifts and playing the waves. On a memorable day at the pre-Olympic regatta at Hyeres last year, he and Walker showed stunning downwind speed and tactical acumen when they came from 26th place at the first weathermark to finish fifth and take the series with a race to spare. Merricks and Walker seemed to have something special and it transferred with them from small dinghies to keel-boats. When they got into a Melges 24 for the first time, they came within a whisker of winning the British title and would have won the European championship shortly after that had they not thrown it away in the last race.

It was the same story in the Admiral's Cup. Many thought that the six-month learning curve would be too steep, but Merricks and Walker chose their crew carefully and scaled the heights to win the class in Bradamante. Merricks had a fine future ahead of him and there is no doubt that he would have gone on to even greater things.



Merricks, right, and Walker show off their silver medals after the Olympic Games last year

Merricks tributes, page 3
Obituary, page 23

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